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ENRICO C. SARTORIO, A. M.

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SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ITALIANS IN AMERICA

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ITALIANS IN AMERICA

BY

REV. ENRICO C. SARTORIO, A. M.

With an Introduction by

DEAN GEORGE HODGES, D. D.

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TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM LAWRENCE, D. D.
BISHOP OF MASSACHUSETTS

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED IN GRATITUDE FOR
HIS LOVE TO MY COUNTRYMEN

46375

INTRODUCTION.

Several years ago a great publishing house desired to get a German book translated into English. The first writer to whom this commission was given was found to know German well, but English not so well. A second writer was found to be better acquainted with English than he was with German. It was not until after a good deal of searching that the happy discovery was made of a man who could both read German and write English excellently. A like discovery appears in the pages of this book. Mr. Sartorio knows the Italian people by nature and by long and intimate acquaintance, and he knows the American people by wise observation and by the fortunate experience of illuminating friendships. Thus he stands in a position which fits him for the important work of interpretation.

Our present national situation brings into strong light the unwelcome fact that we have great numbers of neighbors who are not even hyphenated Americans. They are not Americans at all, except by the accident of residence. They are foreign colonists who have settled in our cities under such conditions of racial detachment that they are unacquainted with our language and our

institutions, and are not in any real sense partakers of our privileges or of our responsibilities. They inevitably misunderstand us, as we naturally misunderstand them. The influences which ought to be making them good citizens are hindered and neutralized by prejudices on both sides. The contributions which they ought to be bringing to the happiness, the enrichment and the strength of our common life are not only not made but not known.

This is a situation which thoughtful people who know even a little about it find intolerable. It is the kind of thing which must not go on. Mr. Sartorio's book is a timely revelation of the width and depth of a racial gulf which must first be bridged and then filled. His suggestions as to the accomplishing of this necessary work are definite and practical inferences from his own successful experience.

George Hodges.

PREFACE.

I am writing in an endeavor to show things as I see them. The American public has read books on immigrants which were written from the Anglo-Saxon viewpoint, books that were more or less the result of outside study or of a short time spent among foreigners in America. My viewpoint is that of an Italian; of a foreigner who came to America already a young man. I write from within, striving to show how a foreigner feels.

The trouble with many of the books on immigration written by Anglo-Saxons, barring the type of book such as Richard Bagot has written, is that they describe the immigrants not as they really are but as the author sees them as the result of his Anglo-Saxon nature and training.

The Italian peasants give to a superficial observer the impression of being of a very simple nature, which can be easily understood. As a matter of fact the nature of the Italian peasant is hard to understand and full of surprises. I have known peasants to talk with me for hours and hours, lowering their voices and looking around as if they were revealing to me their inmost heart and yet leave with me a vague impression of not having even got below the skin of their personalities.

I am not writing in praise of the good achievements and splendid results obtained by the different religious and social institutions at work among Italians. I join with many of my people in a profound gratitude towards all Americans who with sincere motives and in a noble and altruistic spirit have given time and money to protect and enlighten the immigrants who found themselves in a new country. However, this book is but a presentation of the Italian viewpoint on the subjects treated; the criticism here presented is made in order to point out ways of eliminating defects of method and misunderstandings so that there may be ever better results.

Part of the contents of this book was given in the form of lectures at the Cambridge Episcopal Theological School and at the Cambridge School Conference, 1917, and I here acknowledge my indebtedness to the School authorities for permission to print this material. Part of Chapter 1 has already appeared in a slightly different form in The Bible Magazine, February, 1915, under the title "The Italian Challenge to Christian America," and I thank the editor of that magazine for his permission to reprint it here.

I take occasion to pay my tribute to Dean George Hodges, D. D., of Cambridge, who kindly read the manuscript and wrote the introduction to this work; I desire also to

thank The Very Rev. George Nelson, D. D., of New York City, for his enlightened and kind criticism.

Lastly, my thanks and gratitude are due to Miss Marguerite Fiske of Cambridge, who has taken pains both with manuscript and proof to the betterment of both.

I am aware of the imperfections inherent in a work like this, but I trust that it will prove to be of some value to students of the subject and beg them to overlook what may seem to them worthless or deficient.

Enrico C. Sartorio.

Christ Church Rectory,
Boston, August, 1917.

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CHAPTER I.

LIFE IN THE ITALIAN COLONIES.

In what number Italians are coming to America.—Where they come from.—What classes of Italians come.—Their work in America.—Their thrift.—The type of Americans that they meet.—The criminal class.—The test: work.—"Omertà."—Different types of Italians and their general characteristics.—The Neapolitan.—The Sicilian.—Language and dialects.—The professional class.—The Italian newspapers.—The "parvenu" class.—The new American.

Out of an average of 300,000 Italians who came annually to America previous to the war less than 40,000 were Northern Italians, the rest were from Southern Italy. As is shown in the United States report on immigration, ninety-six per cent are classified as unskilled laborers. This classification is incorrect, for these so-called "unskilled laborers" are as a rule good tillers of the soil, know a great deal about farming, and, if the difficulties of the English language and the lack of funds did not hinder them, would make splendid farmers.

Italians were coming in increasing numbers during the last ten years before the war; certain provinces of Southern Italy, notwithstanding the prolificness of the race, have been depopulated. "When the mayor of a small commune in Sicily, addressing the prime minister of Italy, said: 'I salute you, sir, in the name of ten thousand constitu-

ents, eight thousand of whom are already in the United States, and the other two thousand are preparing to go,' he stated the grim humour of the situation."* The Italian flood of immigration has somewhat subsided during the war, but will soon rise again in all its strength when the war is over. There are now about 200,000 men in the Italian army who have been to America and who will come back to it. The "literacy test" is not going to keep out either them or others who wish to come. The military system in Italy has now provided for compulsory schooling for all young men in the service. Besides, the United States is going to need laborers to keep up its growth and to take the place of those who will remain in the army and navy, which will be much larger in the future than they have been in the past. America will have the alternative of letting in a multitude of Orientals or of making the "literacy test" a dead law; it will choose the second course.

This stream of Italian immigration flows from the rural districts of Southern Italy and comes to America prompted generally by the poor economic conditions which exist on the other side of the ocean. Looking facts in the face, Italians are not imitators of the Puritans, who came to America to find political and religious freedom. They come for bread and butter. This is nothing

*Sicily, William S. Monroe, Boston, 1909.

against them, because, except for the earlier Anglo-Saxon settlers, immigrants of all nations have come from the same motive and the West has grown prosperous through Americans who have gone there to improve their material condition.

I shall only occasionally refer to the very small percentage of city people, skilled workmen and professional men, who make up the rest of the Italian immigration, and I wish it to be understood that when I say "Italians" I mean the large number of Southern Italian peasants which constitutes the mass of my countrymen in America.

Eighty-four per cent of the Italians coming here are between eighteen and forty-five years of age. That means that eighty-four per cent of them belong to the working age. They are, in other words, producers. Adolfo Rossi, supervisor of the Italian Emigration Department, writes: "Every Italian eighteen years old has cost his country, at the very lowest, $1,000 to bring him up to that age. At that time he begins to be a producer, but by leaving Italy the $1,000 invested by his country in him is lost. The 'human capital' of fresh, strong young men is the contribution of Italy to the new land. Italy spends a thousand dollars to bring up and develop a young man, and then America reaps the profits of the investment."

They crowd into the big American cities,

men who have almost never seen a city. Among conditions that they have never known, surrounded by strange people of other races, they build their villages with their "imported" doctors, priests, bankers, etc. In the heart of the nearest city one can find in the Italian colony a Sicilian, a Calabrian, a Neapolitan, an Abruzzian village, all within a few blocks, and each with its peculiar traditions, manner of living, and dialect. In New York there are as many Italians as in the city of Rome; there are more Italians in Philadelphia than in Florence; Chicago, Pittsburg, Baltimore, and Boston have Italian populations equal to those of cities of the size of Perugia, Parma, Padua, and Syracuse.

The life that Italians live in America is not an easy one. They perform the duties that the slaves performed in ancient Rome; they sweep the streets, black shoes, build railroads, dig in mines, do the rougher work in factories. The more thrifty succeed in a few years in opening a grocery store or a saloon. They are isolated from the rest of the American world by what I may call the instinct of self-preservation; they know that as soon as they step outside of the Italian colony they are almost as helpless as babies, owing to their lack of knowledge of the language, customs and laws of this country. That is one of the fundamental reasons why these people, who through generations have

been in touch with nature, living in the open air, working in the fields, prefer the gray life of the slums: anything rather than to be separated from the rest of their countrymen. It is the instinct that makes all living creatures band together in time of storm. One of the greatest surprises of my life and one from which I cannot recover, is to hear from time to time, especially from Italian women who have lived in America for years, a statement like this: "I have been down to America today," meaning that they have gone a few blocks outside the district of the Italian colony. It may not strike you as such, but to many Italians going from Boston to New York alone means a very venturesome undertaking, a voyage that may be attended by lurking dangers. As a boy in Milan I always found it a very curious sight to see English and American tourists, trooping around with queer little red books, their noses in the air or in the book, guided by a loose-jointed fellow in a sort of uniform. It was a problem to my boyish mind why these people banded together and were compelled to see only what their guide wished them to see. I found the explanation in America when I noticed how seldom I saw one of my countrymen travelling alone.

The wages of Italian workingmen are the lowest paid to any laborer in America and yet they succeed in saving enough to send

for their families in Italy or to help their relations. The enterprise and thrift of Italians are indicated by statistics which show that Italians own in the city of New York alone more than $100,000,000 worth of real estate, besides having about $24,000,000 saved in banks. That the Italian prefers to live meanly and in a dirty fashion, in order to save, has often been said, but if one stops to think, he will see that what is ascribed to meanness is only ignorance of the new conditions that the Italian immigrant finds on this side of the ocean. In his village he slept with his family crowded in one room. That did not hurt him or his family, for they did not live in the room, as they are compelled to do here by the bitter climate; they just slept there for a few hours. During the short, cool Italian nights only were they inside. Life was spent working, eating and resting in the open air. The sturdy peasant in Italy ate the fruits of his "orto," drank the wine of his vineyard, wore the wool of his sheep. No one paid attention, except when he went to church on Sunday, to the way in which he was dressed, and he was not very particular how infrequently he shaved. Early in the morning he called out to his friends across the street as he went to the field. No one was disturbed by it. People were up early in the village. He sang as he crossed the village going to work and coming back; the "stornello" of

his friend answered his song. He walked in the middle of the street as everybody else did, and did not spit on the sidewalk for the obvious reason that there was none.

Now, for the first time in his life experience, he comes to live in a big city, and American cities are the most complicated and busiest in the world. Do you expect him to know about hygiene, physical geography, and changes of climate? One room was enough for him and his family in Italy. One room he gets here. If he cannot get one room by itself, so much the better; he will earn money by taking boarders. How can he know that there is a difference between canned goods and fresh vegetables? Only wealthy people shaved every day back in his village; is he not a poor man? Thus, through ignorance of the new surroundings in which he finds himself, he lives a dog's life and some money is saved. Does he gesticulate, talk loudly, sing in the streets, spit on the sidewalk, to the great amazement and horror of the American-bred in the big city? Think of his village, of his life there, and you will find out why he does it. You will feel like teaching instead of judging. Italians have brought from Italy sturdy, healthy bodies, a frugal, simple way of living and the simple traditions of village life, and a great many lose all these valuable assets in a few years. The women and children are those who suffer most from the

new conditions under which they are compelled to live. No more bright sun, life in the open air, coarse but unadulterated food; the filth of the slums, the limited and crowded space for their housing, and the cheap canned goods break down even the strongest among them. How many times have I seen young Italian women newly arrived with rosy cheeks and the golden light of the Italian sun in their eyes become in a few months faded and worn from the effect of changed conditions. In place of the "Festa Campestre," (the village dance,) the "Festa Patronale," (the feast of the patron saint,) America offers to the Italian man the curse of the saloon, the poisonous atmosphere of cheap moving pictures, and the dangers of the slum dance hall. In Italy we know the difference between a peasant who has lived there always and one who has spent a few years in America and then gone back. The former is poorer but the latter is quite often rotten.

I am not blaming America as a nation. That it is a great free country, a country of great opportunity for the development of mind and life, no one denies. The difficulty is that the only way to find this out is through its citizens, and Americans (I speak of the Americans who would best represent their country in the eyes of my people) seldom go near the "Little Italys" of their big cities.

Let me tell you about those who do not keep away from my countrymen, and who endeavor to give to the Italians an impression of what this country is. First in line comes the saloonkeeper—he comes smiling or swearing, according to the financial condition of his patrons, and it is in doing the second thing that he also acts as teacher of English for most Italians. Next comes the ward politician. He builds a brick house, calls it a club, gives the use of it to my countrymen, telling them to have a good time, meaning to go inside and gamble, while his friend, the saloon man, keeps the bar. Of course, they have only to oblige him by voting for the men of his choice. Here is another sore spot. I refer to the selling of votes on such a large scale among foreigners. Do you know that sixty-five per cent of the Italian immigrants never once voted in their native country? Do you know that a man will sell readily things of which he does not realize the value? Till a few years ago no one could vote in Italy without having been through the grammar school or its equivalent. The majority of the peasants that come here never voted and do not know the value or clearly understand the use of the vote. Who is to blame, the mother who puts the knife in the hand of her child, allowing it to cut its fingers, or the child itself?

The yellow papers, always ready to em-

phasize and magnify the faults of the "degenerate Latin race," give to the average American the impression that the Italian colonies are dens of criminals. I have met a Harvard student who was in the habit of taking a pistol and "coming down to the North End to seek adventures." He thought the Italian colony the most dangerous place in the city. The slums of Italian quarters are due to poverty, not to vice and crime. Many of the so-called crimes among Italians are not crimes at all from a certain viewpoint and many mistakes are made through the enforcement in the case of Italians of a law that was drawn up for Anglo-Saxons. The state of political administration which existed in Italy, and especially in the Southern part, only a short time ago, practically compelled a man to take the law into his own hands in order to safeguard his interests, his family and his life. We in America have something of an illustration of this in the Western life of the last generation. When an Italian kills a man, it is generally ascribed to the spirit of "vendetta." It may be only a keen sense of honor wrongly applied that prompted him to commit the murder in order to defend his wife's or daughter's honor or to punish a man who had wronged his kinsman. The tribal or clannish spirit is very strong among Italians of a certain type and what you regard as a criminal tendency may be

considered, if you study the traditions of these people, as a manifestation of chivalry. Think of the feuds of the Kentucky mountains between individuals of the purest English stock! A few bold criminals, under the present system of advertising as hideously as possible their crimes, can give a "black eye" to a colony of thousands. No one is trying to deny that there are "bad eggs" in "Little Italy," it is only that there are different angles from which the problem can be considered. Some time ago a man was killed by an Italian over a glass of beer. The murderer happened to have a thousand dollars in his pocket; he secured the services of an American lawyer and was "miraculously" cleared. Another man murdered one of his friends and was condemned to life imprisonment. This man, of some influence among his countrymen, could secure votes in time of need. On account of his previous services along that line he was helped out of prison after two or three years of detention. Not only that, but he was appointed to a public position to increase his power as a ward politician. These are a few instances among hundreds. Does any one wonder that criminals become bold? When a man plans to do evil, knowing that if he has money or friends he can break the law with almost a certainty of going unpunished, when he knows only the evil and corruption of this country and no one cares to tell him of

anything better, of course that man will get reckless. But who will be at fault?

If the best Americans would teach to a large number of Italians the real freedom and nobility of this country and would help them, they would rise up as one man against the few criminals that dwell among them. Besides, if the criminals knew that if they broke the law there would be no power on earth, no money, no friends that could save them from being severely punished, they would run away from America as they did from Italy, because the law was after them. Often, when I have tried to describe America to a group of immigrants as a country where justice is shown equally to all men, I have been answered by a bitter laugh, followed by stories of instances of crude and brutal injustice, until my heart grew sick. Then I was told that there were men in the city who called themselves lawyers, interpreters, "runners," whose business it was to help every man in trouble; that these men were "in" with the police and with the judges; that no matter what the crime a man had committed, if he had money, his case was oftentimes dismissed or never even went to court; that no matter how just his cause, a poor man could do nothing against these fiends;—no there was no justice in America, everything was for sale to the highest bidder.

Very seldom is an Italian woman to be

found in the police courts, and they are noted among the other foreigners for their thrift and virtue. Notwithstanding the enormous number of Italian immigrants, only eight Italian women were deported in 1914 for immoral conduct—only eight out of the 65,247 women that came in. In spite of the fact that Italy seems to many the land of the beggar, the Italian immigrant is rarely a mendicant, and, according to Jacob Riis, among the street beggars of New York only two per cent are Italian. In the almshouses of New York the Italian has the smallest representation. Out of every 28,000 Italians in the city of New York there is only one in the almshouse on Blackwell's Island. Mr. Forbes, the president of the Society for the Prevention of Mendicancy in New York, says that he has never seen or heard of an Italian tramp.

If work is the test that this country requires of a man, the Italian certainly meets the test, for he is a worker, a picked man. As soon as they reach this country Italians are set to work digging in mines, building railroads, bridges, "skyscrapers," cleaning streets, harvesting fields, laboring under, on, and above earth, and they stick to their work till they drop. Your railroads, your public buildings, your coal are wet with Italian sweat and blood. I am writing about the bulk of the Italians, leaving barbers, tailors, bootblacks, and all skilled la-

borers aside. They are paid for it, it is true, but they pay a price beyond the money they get. "In the suffering they endure in damp mines, by the hot metal blasts, in cold ditches, and in dark and dangerous tunnels, they pay the price, indeed," says Steiner. He estimates that about ten thousand foreigners a year "lay down their lives digging coal, making steel, blasting stones, and doing the numberless dangerous drudgeries of the industrial life of this country." A few years ago so many Italians were being killed in this country while working that the Italian government instructed its consuls to investigate. They soon found out that they had assumed a big undertaking and they had to build up about each office a whole staff of lawyers and clerks, who got their information from news items, fellow-workmen, relatives in Italy, and, by special arrangement, from city and county records.

If I should undertake to narrate the many cases in which Italians have to suffer abuse and swindling at the hands of unscrupulous American companies, I could fill many pages. About four years ago, early one morning, a man came to me calling for help. Two squares away an engine had exploded. Out of a gang of fifteen Italians working near by three were killed and seven injured. I followed up the cases. So far as I know only $100 was ever paid by the railroad company and that after a bitter struggle lasting

almost a year. The one who got the money, a widow, was advised to go back to Italy, which she did; the others never succeeded in getting a cent. Four of the wounded and two of the dead were married men with children. Two of the seven were crippled for life. All for a hundred dollars!

There are a great many who think that Italy is still the land of the "dolce far niente." Listen to one American's account: "The Italian peasant as a rule begins his working day at three in the morning in summer and at five in winter. He works till eight or nine, when he rests for an hour and has his breakfast, which consists of bread and cheese, perhaps a slice or two of salame —a kind of sausage—and wine. Then he recommences and works till midday, when he has his dinner, which is either brought to him in the fields if he is far away from his home, or if he is within reasonable distance he goes to his house for it. In winter he usually begins work again at two, or even before, and in summer at three. If it be summer he goes on working until the Ave Maria rings, which during the summer months is not till past eight o'clock in the evening. The hours of the artisan are very much the same, except that in most of the factories and workshops the day begins at seven. Nothing surprises the Italian so much as the lateness of the hour at which shops and other places of business in Eng-

lish towns open in the mornings, unless it be the earliness of the hour at which they close at night. It has always been a mystery to me why my compatriots should have chosen to regard the Italians as a lazy people."*

A man prominent in one of the churches of America was discussing with me the case of an Italian Protestant minister who had to give up his charge because, instead of doing his work, he went into various business enterprises, some of which were not very reputable, and he complained that it had been very difficult for him to find out exactly how much the Italian minister was involved because his Italian friends tried to conceal the possible evil which he might have done. "It seems to me," my friend went on to say, "that the standard of morals that the Italian possesses is much lower than our American standard." I investigated the matter and discovered, first, that this prominent churchman knew only this one Italian, and yet he was ready to accuse a nation of about 40,000,000 people; second, that that particular Italian minister was from a part of Italy where the spirit of "omertà" still exists, while in the other parts of Italy it has disappeared. Luigi Villari thus explains what 'omertà' is: "Centuries of misgovernment, and, above all the infamous Bourbon police systems, have created among the Sicilians an inborn distrust and hatred of authority.

*Italians of Today, Richard Bagot.

All private differences, according to the perverted and monstrous code of honor called "omertà" (literally "manliness") should be settled privately and no information should be given to the agents of the government which may lead to the detection of the criminal." The Italians who were defending the minister did so out of a sense of honor, though a misguided one, and a man who may be called upon tomorrow to settle very important questions in regard to Italian church work, wrongly disposed of the case in question with a rash judgment based on lack of knowledge.

I was called upon some time ago to speak on "The Italian in America" before a Woman's Auxiliary Society, and after the meeting a certain lady asked my wife, "Do you not think that Italians are liars?" Now, my wife happens to be an Italian. When we began to investigate as to how this remarkable opinion was formed, we discovered that this good woman had an Italian family in her street and that one of the children was once upon a time ill. This lady sent her doctor to them and was shocked when the doctor came back with the message that the boy was not ill at all and did not need a doctor. She knew the child was ill, hence Italians are "liars." The psychology of the case was this: the Italian family thought that this woman was patronizing them by sending her doctor when they

could afford to call their own and took a polite way to make her understand this by refusing to admit the doctor whom she sent.

That which makes life interesting in the study of the Italian colonies of America is the meeting of so many and such varied types. The Italian peasants are simple and complex. To define the Italian types would be a more difficult matter than at first appears, for there is no country in the world where so many races and religions have been superimposed one upon another as in Italy. Samnites, Etruscans, Latins, Greeks, Saracens, Normans, Spaniards, French, Teutons have all left their mark and a strain of their blood. In the traditions and folklore of Italy one can easily trace Semitic, Oriental, Greek, Norman, and Teutonic influence, so that the Italian type forming that which is vaguely defined as Latin, has many facets and is a source of perpetual surprise to the student of ethnology and psychology. If a keen observer stops at the corner of a main street of any Italian colony in America, he will see the dark, heavy-lipped, rather thick-set Bedouin type of certain provinces of Sicily, the tall, sinewy, round-headed Greek type of other Sicilian centres, the small, squat, strong Calabrian mountaineer, the little, excitable, artistic Neapolitan, with a strain of Spanish blood in his veins, the bright-eyed, clean-limbed Samnite type of the Abruzzian, the straight-nosed Latin

type from the Roman provinces, and all the other different types of the other provinces of Italy.

There are characteristics common to all Southern Italians. Their physical strength and endurance for work are remarkable for a race which looks rather undeveloped in comparison with the Anglo-Saxon. Quickness of brain, intuitive power, acuteness of intellect are general gifts among them. Richard Bagot says: "The Italian peasantry is in many ways a splendid class—the men with the brains and the big boots—(Scarpe grosse e cervel fino). The Italian peasant is a marvelously shrewd individual. He, or she, knows by instinct what is the pleasant thing to say to an accoster; and, as a rule, he is able at once to assume that refinement of manner in which those even of the humblest class of Italians are seldom lacking, and for which we are apt to look in vain among our own lower orders." And Luigi Villari adds on the subject: "The Italian peasant is patient, hard-working, kind-hearted, and by no means unintelligent. He may be backward, ignorant, prejudiced, and superstitious, but in laboriousness and in the strength of his family affections he has few equals. They are frugal, their lives simple and their wants few. A cheerful disposition enables them to bear up against many troubles."

I have noticed many times and with won-

der the shrewdness in understanding human nature which seems to be the natural gift of the average immigrant. He knows instinctively the proper thing to say to any one who deals with him. Once I was in the room of an Italian club; two ladies whom I knew came in. One was of a motherly type, very well-balanced, quiet and of a religious turn of mind; the other, younger, was somewhat sentimental and nervously cheerful. In a moment they had formed two groups around them and the manner of the Italians in the two groups was suited to the characters of the two ladies; one group being sober, serious, suave, and the other laughing and paying foolish compliments to the younger lady, "putting it on rather thick."

Through an ethnological study of Italy one can trace and explain many of the characteristics of Italian immigrants. Daudet has written a wonderful description of the Frenchman of Provence in his "Tartarin de Tarascon," who is so similar to certain Italians of the Neapolitan provinces as to make one believe that they are his twin brothers. A Neapolitan will call Professor ("professore") a school teacher of inferior education. A carpenter, a shoemaker, a tailor is a "maestro," that is, a teacher. Everybody that is not of the very lowest class is called "Don," Don Gennaro, Don Antonio, Donna Maria, though that title is

used only for the nobility or the priests ordinarily. A Neapolitan will startle you by saying, "I am going to my palace" ("palazzo") when you know that he may live in a basement. I have heard a superficial observer come to the conclusion that this type was not especially truthful. When a Neapolitan instinctively exaggerates, it is not intentional, he is not aware of it. It is the grandiose spirit of the Spanish influence in the Neapolitan provinces, together with the sentimental strain of the typical southerner, that makes him see things as through a magnifying glass. One day the morning mail brought me a letter which began thus, "My heart is broken into a thousand pieces, it is bleeding to death," and the writer went on to say that his brother was sick and perhaps was going to die. Knowing my man, instead of rushing to him I called him up by telephone a few hours later to find him in a state of wild happiness. What really had happened was this: a brother of this man had caught cold and wrote a letter saying that he was not very well. The imagination of my little Neapolitan began to work, and when two days had passed without further news, he had, with his mind's eye, seen his brother dead and buried and had called me up for help. Half an hour after writing this letter to me he had a note from his brother saying he was well again; hence his great joy. This may be an extreme case, but it

shows you how an individual of this emotional type really suffers from what his imagination conjures up, and if one is not careful in trying to distinguish quietly the facts from that which is the fruit of imagination, there will be no possible hope of helping in such a case and one will have nervous prostration in a very short time.

With all that there is a wealth of intelligent, artistic spirit in the heart of every Neapolitan, and the Neapolitans have furnished from the humblest ranks many of the best legal minds, orators, men of letters, diplomats and artists that modern Italy boasts. God knows what influence this swarthy little Neapolitan will have on the future generations of America; for I think that in over-practical, businesslike, money-making America there is need of an infusion of an easy-going, artistic, subtle element, such as the Neapolitan can give.

The volcanic nature of the impetuous Sicilian leads him into much trouble, but it is beautiful to see with what humility and childlike simplicity he is willing to admit his mistake when he cools down. "Sicilians possess energy, fortitude, extraordinary intelligence, with patience and long-suffering. They are warm-hearted, industrious, frugal, with polished manner, and sober."* Strong in hate, I have found them worthy enemies; their motto for enemies is:

*Sicilian studies, Alexander N. Hood.

"Si moru mi voricu;
Si campu t'allampu."†

Stronger in love than in hate, they are admirable friends. A Sicilian friend is a jewel; he is willing to do anything and everything for a friend. Give to such forces the ghost of a chance for an education, put an ideal before such a type, and you will understand the Sicilian Vespers, the Sicilian "picciotti" dying for Garibaldi, and will praise God for the Sicilian race in America which has in it the blood of future heroes. It is often said that the Sicilian is suspicious. Well, all old races, who have suffered and been often deceived, are so. America needs the wisdom and prudence of old races. Many times have I seen my American friends "taken in" because they have not what they call the suspicious temperament in foreigners. Let the international marriages with all their dreadful mistakes speak on that question. A fine gentleman was introduced to me not long ago by an acquaintance as Dr. So-and-So from one of the leading universities of Europe. Our conversation was in French and after a few minutes' talk I became aware that the man was not what he pretended to be. As he wanted my help to get a position, I asked him to show me his diplomas and credentials. He had lost them on the sea while coming over. Yet

†If he kills me, all is over; if I live, I will strike him dead.

I found this man a few months later teaching in a university where he was not found out to be a fraud until a long time afterwards. Such a thing would have been impossible with a people, who, having been many times scalded, are afraid of cold water.

One of the greatest difficulties in the way of understanding Italian immigrants lies in the great difference in life, habits, character, and, to a certain extent, in language, which exists between one part of the Peninsula and another. Very few are aware that there are differences in manners, thought, character, dress, cookery, dialect, quite distinct from one village to another, and all these differences are thrown together in America and called Italian colonies.

Luigi Villari gives a description of the different regional characteristics which is worth quoting:

"The Piedmontese is aristocratic, reserved, hospitable, steady, and industrious, while the Lombard is quick, businesslike, rather noisy and fond of chatter, and active. The Venetian is gossipy, lazy, artistic and not particularly honest. The Tuscan is hard-working, sceptical, courteous, slow, conservative, but not exclusive, full of family affection, and frugal to the point of niggardliness. The Roman is reserved and dignified, but averse to hard work, and his passions frequently lead him to deeds of violence. In the South there is a considera-

ble difference between the Neapolitans (i. e. the inhabitants of the mainland) and the Sicilians. The former are gay, of great natural intelligence and adaptability, artistic, loquacious, superstitious, utterly wanting in self-respect, vicious, fond of a quarrel, especially if it ends in the law courts, and much given to outward show. They are often cruel and cowardly, but in great emergencies they can rise to a height of self-abnegation and heroism which has rarely been equalled. The Sicilian, on the other hand, is silent, and has more dignity than the Neapolitan; he is more gentlemanly in manners and appearance, but he is vindictive and savage, and intolerant of all restraint. The Bourbon kings did their best to keep up the jealousy between the Continentali and the Isolani, on the Roman principle of 'Divide et impera.'" I think that Villari was somewhat unjust towards the Southern Italian and that his judgment would have been fairer if he had tried to explain the political difficulties that Southern Italy went through before the Independence; though he hinted at them a few pages further on as follows:

"The superior business ability and public spirit of the Lombard are due in part to Austrian rule, which, while it was oppressive and unjust in political matters, gave a healthy discipline to the people and an example of honest civil administration. On

the other hand, many of the most regrettable features of Neapolitan and Sicilian life are the inheritance of the corruption and cruelty of the Spanish and Bourbon rulers."

Another factor which makes the study of Italian life in America somewhat difficult is the almost unlimited number of different dialects to be heard in the colonies. In Italy they stand in the way of the national unity of the race, but if a Northern Italian is sent to work, let us say in Calabria, after he has mastered the fundamental laws of the Calabrian dialect he may be able to understand the people. In America, however, where one finds grouped together Italians from all regions of Italy, one is compelled to study a great many years before one is able to understand all the dialects. This difficulty, however, is not so great as many think. When a Northern Italian speaks his dialect, a Sicilian may not be able to understand him, yet, although a knowledge of all the dialects of Italy is undoubtedly useful, it is not absolutely necessary; for every Italian, no matter how little educated, understands the pure Italian language. "A North Italian and a South Italian will understand each other because each will try to use as many purely Italian words as he can, but a Northerner will not understand two Sicilians who are talking by themselves, especially if they are anxious

that he should not do so."* In my experience of more than ten years of life among Italians in America I have not found a single case in which an Italian could not understand me when I talked to him in pure Italian, though I was glad of my knowledge of dialects because it helped me to understand his answer better. To illustrate, just recently a Sicilian woman came complaining that her husband had left her without a "grano." Ten years ago I should have understood her to mean that he had left her without a grain of corn, for that is what "grano" means in Italian, but in Sicilian a "grano" is a small coin.

The professional class among Italians is composed practically wholly of physicians, dentists and lawyers; there are a few eminent ones, especially in large cities, and they deserve the more credit for keeping up a high standard under difficulties, but as a rule they are decidedly mediocre; even those who have studied in America, chose almost invariably the second-rate schools at which to study. This small class of professional men makes up the thinking part of the colony.

There is usually in a colony an Italian newspaper which is the mouthpiece of whomsoever has an opinion to express. It would form an interesting literature, reflecting the Italian view of America, if one should undertake to translate the innumer-

*Luigi Villari, Italian Life in Town and Country.

able articles printed in the Italian newspapers of America. Here again I may say there are honorable exceptions, but usually either the articles concerning America are written by people who have lived all their life among Italians and, being prejudiced through their lack of understanding of the new country in which they live, are ready to misrepresent it; or they are written by unscrupulous men who play upon popular feeling and endeavor to get into the good graces of the subscribers by exalting everything Italian and decrying everything American. I have read articles written by men who knew the American institutions of learning only through the study of a few specimens of their profession graduated from a fourth-rate professional school, describe America as the land of quacks and bluffers. The writer could not have passed an entrance examination to Harvard or any other great university to save his life. I have seen articles denouncing with fiery words the political corruption of this land, and I have noticed at the same time that the paper was advising its readers simultaneously to vote for three different parties, and on the fourth page advertising whiskey concerns and public houses of bad fame. I have read descriptions of American life calling it artificial, unscrupulous, money-crazed, hypocritical, only to discover that the writer did not know a word of English or that he had no

American friends except a few doubtful characters of the sporting set whose accent was anything but American.

It is chiefly from these papers that the Italian population gets its information concerning America. I thank God for the opportunity I have had to know America as it really is, and I wish that the church would train more of my people in the best American institutions, so that a small army of men and women may tell to my people, in words, in writings and in deeds, the ideals of this country. The statement of an Italian carries more weight with his fellow-countrymen than that of ten Americans put together on this question, for obvious reasons.*

There are good Italian families who have succeeded in entering into American life, who live among Americans, and who are qualified to place America in a better light for their countrymen. Unfortunately some of them suffer from a new form of snobbishness. Last winter I went to an Italian lecture given by a young professional man; at the close I talked with him and found him well posted on the life and manners of this country. I still remember with regret the vain smile of superiority that appeared on his face when I told him that I lived at the North End of Boston. "Io non vado fra

* In Chapter 2 the question of newspapers is further discussed.

quella plebaglia" (I do not go among those plebeians); that is the attitude taken by people who could be of much help to the less fortunate and to newcomers. Having moved away from the Italian colony, and acquired American friends and the American manner of living, they seem either to be ashamed of their origin or afraid that people will confound them with their more ignorant countrymen; they lose all sense of responsibility toward their race and show the characteristics of the parvenu type. A real gentleman does not feel dishonored by stretching out his hand to a fellow-man.

A room-mate of mine, a young Genoese, used to wake me up in the middle of the night to declaim passages from Shakespeare. I saw him in New York a few years later and we fell into conversation about America. I found his views to be those of the typical and best "new American." He had had the advantage of coming in touch with a great many American institutions as well as American men and women and had caught the spirit and the ideals of the country.

America may seem to the superficial observer a country where the materialistic spirit rules; and he may think that this country is the "Land of the Dollar" rather than the "Sweet land of liberty." To the small army of "new Americans," who, like my friend, have found generosity, demo-

cratic feeling, opportunities for education, kind-hearted friends, simple clear-sighted men and women of Anglo-Saxon blood, America is the land that has won their hearts and gained their respect. They came to know America as the country so well described by the French philosopher Henri Bergson. "America," he wrote, "is the country of idealism; it is the land of the ideal. He who has lived in America realizes that there is no country in the world where money means less. It is only necessary to see how they spend it, how they give it, and for what they earn it. They earn it and they seek for it only that they may give proof that they have made every effort possible. Money over there is a certificate of efficiency. Whoever has lived in America knows that high ideals, moral and religious, have the first place over there. Whoever has studied American literature and philosophy knows that the American soul is impregnated with idealism and even with mysticism. Whoever has studied American history knows that abstract and generous thoughts of morality and justice have always held first place. It is upon pure ideals and pure thoughts that the American Nation was built, and it is perhaps the only nationality in the world which was thus built consciously and freely." The "new American" resents it when America is spoken of depreciatively; he wishes to work

to maintain and to raise the religious, moral and patriotic ideals which are possessed by this country. He knows that people of the real Anglo-Saxon type believe in God and in a clean life; that they are idealists who, having limitations like other human beings, yet are ever ready to give up material advantages for spiritual ones. The "new Americans" of Latin blood have found a brother as to principles and life in the Americans of Anglo-Saxon blood and with joy they will labor to make the real type of American known to the people of their race who have not had the opportunity of knowing it as they do.

This is roughly a description of the life of my people in America; hard work, low wages, large families, dark lodgings, poor food, no leadership or wrong leadership, a new world whirling around them and no door of entrance for them. Hope lies in the power of education, in the patient efforts of earnest workers, and in multiplying the means of putting the best that America can offer within the reach of the immigrant's ambition. To me the most hopeful thing in regard to Italians in America is that I have found honesty, ambition, intelligence, determination to succeed, to be the common characteristics of individuals of the immigrant type. Every effort I have made to help a typical young immigrant boy or girl, man or woman, has brought forth such good results

as to make me willing to do more. I have had my disillusions but they came from the type we call "mezzecalzette," the half-educated. The good workingman, the peasant straight from the soil, the class, in a word, who form the rank and file of our Italian immigration, is that which will give to America earnest, honest, clean citizens.

CHAPTER II.

AMERICANIZATION.

What Americanization is.—How Italians know America.—What they think about America.—the patronizing spirit.—Social work.—What Italians can contribute to the future American life.—Methods of appealing to prospective citizens.—The second generation.—Americanization a natural process, not an artificial one.

The cry of today in America is "America for the Americans." The present war in Europe has revealed in an almost tragic way the danger in which America stood of losing its Anglo-Saxon characteristics and ideals, its democratic spirit and liberty. Rome fell chiefly because of the indifference of the Roman people towards the ever-increasing multitude of strangers that, as slaves and freemen, was crowding into its national life.

There are in America thousands of hyphenated Americans and I think I do not fall short of the mark in saying that until recently the majority of the American people were utterly indifferent to the need of Americanizing the stranger in their midst, or, if not indifferent, they wished to do it in an aggressive and superficial way. When I speak of Americanizing the foreigner I do not mean dwarfing the characteristics of one race in order to superimpose upon it the characteristics of another race. Americanization is this: making use of the best in the

foreigner's nature, such as family love, religious spirit, love of country and humanity, by instilling in him a clear vision of the American nation, which was formed by men who had the same feelings that he has in his heart. Thus far America has not found to any appreciable extent the way of making itself known to the foreigner in its midst.

I am only acquainted with the knowledge of America which exists among Italians, but that which I know is sad enough. The average professional man, coming already educated and with a certain set of ideas and habits, settles down in one of the Italian colonies, arrogating to himself the right to describe America as he sees it to the multitude of immigrants, who believe America to be as this leader describes it in the Italian newspaper. With few exceptions, the average Italian professional man has no way of knowing America as it really is. He lives all day long among his own countrymen, he never enters an American institution of learning to study, since he has already received his education, and on account of his financial condition, he is forced as a rule to have his home either in the Italian quarter or in a rather poor American quarter. After a period of laborious study he acquires sufficient knowledge of English to read cheap American newspapers, but these papers in America are, as a rule, not good interpreters of American life. He meets in

the Italian restaurants and hotels of the colony some Americans, but the American who habitually patronizes such places does more to harm America than a legion of hyphenated Americans. I have seen a large number of articles from Italian newspapers, written by Italian professional men concerning America, which, if translated and published, would open the eyes even of the blind. America is described in these articles as a ruthless, rapacious, hypocritical, puritanical country; American men are superficial, weak, ridiculous; American women are vain and prefer to have a good time rather than to be good wives and mothers; churches in America are places of business; social and philanthropic work is established to furnish fat salaries to innumerable office-holders; the political life is incurably corrupt; and everything else is termed "Americanate," meaning the quintessence of foolishness. A sensational divorce case, a scandal at the City Hall, Dowie or Billy Sunday, anything and everything is used as a pretext for a long philippic against America. I have seen Italian newspapers with laudatory articles on America written in English, which no Italian would read, and with an article in Italian in the same issue, that the American would not understand, painting America in the blackest colors. I greatly admire the campaign started under the patronage of the American Civic League in the news-

paper "Il Cittadino" in which very earnest and sincere articles concerning America are published, but for one newspaper like that there are a dozen of the other kind. The depreciatory articles which appear in Italian papers are written sometimes by very sincere men whose only fault is that they do not know whereof they speak; their chief mistake is that they generalize, that is to say, they judge the whole American people by the descriptions in the yellow press and by the few wretched specimens of American manhood whom they meet in public life. There is an increasing number of Americans of Italian extraction, who, having the opportunity to know American life well, are now publishing works that will enlighten Italian immigrants on this subject.

The root of the evil does not lie, however, in the above-mentioned class. I may be too harsh in my judgment, but it seems to me the fault is to be traced to the extreme conservativeness of the best American families, whose doors are seldom opened to the educated Italian who chooses America for his new country. A few young diplomats, who after all will not remain long in America, some well-recommended artists or writers may be welcomed to the homes of the American middle and upper classes, but that is all. I still remember with what sadness a young Calabrian lawyer came to me for advice. He said, "I have been living for four years in

a small city of New Jersey, an old Quaker city, and I have not yet been received by a single American family."

Among certain people there still exists the old prejudice that there must be something the matter with a foreigner. Exclusiveness on one side, loneliness on the other, do not help to interpret American life in the right spirit to the foreigner. If educated Italians thus do not know the real America, you can easily imagine what the immigrant's conception of America may be. My barber, who has been in this country twenty-eight years, was dumbfounded when I told him the other day that six people out of seven in America are Protestant. The poor fellow had gone about for twenty-eight years tipping his hat to every church, thinking that they were all Roman Catholic churches. I have found over and over again Italian couples living together in the belief that they were husband and wife, because they misunderstood American law. They had been told that in America a civil marriage was as valid as a religious one, so they went to the City Hall and by going through the process of answering questions in taking out the marriage license, they thought they had been married and went happily home to live together as husband and wife. An Italian tried to explain to me the meaning of Thanksgiving Day. "You see," he said, "the word explains itself, 'Tacchinsgiving

Day' "; "tacchin" meaning turkey in Italian, it was, according to this man, the day on which Americans gave away turkeys.

And what opportunity has an immigrant to know this country when he sees America only at its worst? Through the gum-chewing girls whom he meets in factories, through the hard-drinking and hard-swearing "boss" who orders him about, through the dubious type of youth whom he meets at the saloon and in the dance hall, through the descriptions given in Italian newspapers and by cheap orators he comes to know America. Add to that poor wages, quarters in the slums, policemen, car conductors and ushers who laugh at him when he asks for information, "bosses" who claim a fee for securing him a job, and the sweet names of "Dago" and "Ghiny" by which the supposed American thinks himself entitled to call him, and you can imagine what a delightful feeling the average Italian has toward this country.

Where does the fault lie? In prejudice and indifference, and in the spirit of patronage. Americans who judge by appearances, who have not travelled in Italy or studied modern Italian life, scornfully turn away from the Italian immigrant because he is not as clean-shaven or as well-kempt as the American workingman. Other Americans do not concern themselves with foreigners. They have a vague knowledge

that there is somewhere, in some God-forsaken corner of the city, a foreign population, and that is all. Still others take a sentimental view of the matter; they have somewhat the feeling that existed in the bosom of an Irishwoman, a neighbor of mine. On Saturday night,—she was always affectionate on that special night,—she would wipe her eyes and say, "Thim poor Eyetalians." This kind of person means well, but generally has zeal without knowledge.

A lady of refinement, born in a leading city of Italy, married to an Italian Protestant minister who is now at the head of an important religious movement in Italy, one day received the following letter:

"Dear Madam,

"We are going to have a bazaar for the benefit of Italians. Please come to help us, *dressed in the national costume that you used to wear in Italy.*"

A son of a leading lawyer of Naples came to this country and was soon holding a fine position and making a good living. He met at church an American lady who told him that she would be very glad to see him the next day at her house. At the appointed hour our young gentleman went there and handed his card to the servant. "Oh, yes," she said, "the lady gave me something for you," and she thrust into his hand a dilapi-

dated suitcase and a note. The note read:
"Dear Sir,

"I have been called away suddenly, but my maid will give you the article which I intended to present to you in asking you to call. As I no longer have use for this suitcase perhaps it would serve you on your next trip to Italy.

"Trusting to see you at church next Sunday,

"Sincerely yours,——"

On another occasion an Italian minister was sent to a new field. A few days after he had settled down he had a telephone call from the wife of a minister of the town, who invited him to call at her house. At the appointed hour he went and was met by the servant, who gave him a newspaper bundle. The young man protested, saying that he had come to call in response to an invitation. The servant went upstairs but came back saying there was no mistake, that the lady wished that given to him. On reaching home he found that the contents consisted of cast-off clothing for his children. He bought a handsome edition of an Italian book for children, translated into English, and sent it with his regards to the patronizing lady.

I could go on indefinitely with such stories, but I think that these few are enough to illustrate how zeal and a desire to do good are sometimes dangerous when wrongly ap-

plied. The indiscriminate giving away of old clothes, food, and coal among foreigners by private societies and individuals not only may offend self-respecting people but may also pauperize poor foreigners who otherwise would be perfectly self-supporting. Finding that with little effort he can secure valuable articles, the foreigner is tempted to take advantage of the opportunity. This fact any social worker is willing to admit. I appreciate the work of the Associated Charities, for there at least, so far as human knowledge goes, every case is carefully investigated and the begging type of individual is quickly detected.

Italy has no social work in the American sense. The psychological motive which fosters social work in America is the spirit of standardizing. The ready-made suit, the model two-story house are American institutions; the spirit of the country is that of making things uniform. In Italian streets one can see all kinds of types and costumes; no one pays attention to that; every man has some personal way of dressing, of wearing his hair or moustache two or three inches longer or shorter than his neighbor; no one is concerned about it. In America for a man to wear his hair hanging one inch down on his shoulder is enough to make him lose his position, or to gather a crowd in the street. The strongest argument in this country is: "This is not the way we do it,"

or: "I have never seen it done that way." The Italian attitude is: "Let every man act in his own way; I have no right to impose my ways upon him." Americans see among the new-comers certain methods of life that they think wrong, and they get up social organizations which, with energy and devotion, try to change them. Many of the habits and customs that they try to change are not wrong at all but just different ways of doing the same things. Italians resent this aggressive attitude; they do not understand that it is prompted by good will and would prefer to be let alone. Though many of the Italians welcome the social workers with a smile because they hate to be impolite, it would fill a volume to write what they really think of them.

Social workers sometimes make the same mistake that the old style foreign missionary used to make abroad: it was of greater interest to him and he thought more of succeeding in making a native boy adopt the European costume or eat with a fork than of bringing about a psychological development in the native life. In reading the report of a group of social workers I found a remark like this: "Not yet Americanized; still eating Italian food." I have heard Italian families complain about the aggressive, blunt way in which some social workers burst into their homes and upset the usual routine of their lives, opening windows, un-

dressing children, giving orders not to eat this and that, not to wrap up babies in swaddling clothes, and so forth. Social workers are well-intentioned but they forget that they are dealing with human beings and not with cattle. Furthermore, it is not by forcing matters but by educating people in a kindly way that good is accomplished. The mother of five or six children may, with some reason, be inclined to think that she knows a little more about how to bring up children than the young-looking damsel who insists upon trying to teach her how to do it. As to her method of wrapping up the baby, a doctor was telling me a short time ago that there was a certain advantage in the old custom of wrapping babies in swaddling clothes when, as among the immigrants, mothers have numerous children and the babies have to be carried about by a careless girl scarcely out of her teens; it has saved many a baby's spine. Fortunately the type of social worker that I have just mentioned is not in the majority and philanthropic institutions have now in their service better trained and kindly persons who, by their tact and understanding, accomplish a great deal of good.

Italians have a strong prejudice against social betterment institutions and social workers. It may be said that they are not as willing as they should be to help the more unfortunate among their own people; but in

any case it is true that very few intelligent efforts are made on the part of Americans to seek the co-operation of Italians. There are always in the colonies Italian young men and women with zeal and education who could be made use of for social work, thus destroying the Italian argument against social work, namely that it is done in a patronizing spirit by Americans who come down among them to civilize them as if they were barbarians. At a slight expense young Italian-Americans could in a short time be trained in American schools to be excellent and intelligent workers among their people. Is it not curious that there is scarcely one Italian at the head of a social betterment institution among his people in America? Social workers of Italian origin would understand how to avoid misunderstanding and mistakes, having the same feelings about the methods of work as the rest of their people.

I attended last year a gathering of representatives of all the Evangelical churches in Boston. The gathering was to consider extensive religious work among the foreigners of the community. Not a single representative of the different foreign colonies was invited. There are among the Russians, Greeks, Poles and Italians in Boston professional men, lawyers, doctors and even Protestant ministers; but that did not seem to matter. The good representatives of that

gathering felt no need of advice from the educated leaders of the different races which they desired to influence. Would it not seem rather patronizing if a group of educated Frenchmen were to get together in Paris with the intention of doing some religious work among a certain type of Americans who live there—and there are in Paris Americans who do very queer things—without at least consulting refined and educated Americans and asking their co-operation? Yet things of this kind are often done among Italians, many times thoughtlessly, and suggest a patronizing spirit which is bitterly resented.

Italians have been thought of by some as "an undesirable element." This "undesirable element" in South America has succeeded in becoming the leading element of civilization. Even taking into consideration the fact that Italian immigration to South America includes a larger percentage of Northern Italians than does that to North America, yet it is remarkable that in a few years the natural shrewdness of the Italian peasant should have succeeded in South America in conquering for him and his children the best positions in all fields of human activity. A writer thus sums up the situation: "The Italians in South America have a monopoly of the corn-farms, wine, wheat. These uneducated, poverty-stricken Italian peasants have built up a

mighty work in a few years. An Italian has been President of the Republic; the present Ministers of Education and War are Italians. By sheer dint of industry and perseverance and native shrewdness, the men, who in the United States are condemned as useless or dangerous paupers, have carved their way to comfort or influence." *

While in South America Italians have a future as a race, because they find there little competition from the Spanish, Portuguese and half-breeds, and because the language and civilization of that country are of Latin extraction, in the United States it is quite different. Educated Italians are well aware that here Italians as a race have no future. Either the Italian becomes Americanized, in which case he loses his native characteristics by adopting an entirely different language and way of living, or there is little prospect of success for him. Italians cling to their language and traditions with the tenacity which the English show for theirs. The success of Italians in the United States will depend upon their willingness to be "melted" into the Anglo-Saxon race. In South America Italians find a Latin race that regards life from a point of view similar to their own. The institutions, the laws, the ideals are practically the same; the language is a neo-Latin

*Italy Today, Bolton King, New York, 1901.

language like the Italian; he finds himself in his own element and rises to his opportunities. In the United States he is brought into contact with a different civilization; the laws, the institutions, the ideals of the country are foreign to him; he has to compete with workingmen who are as a rule better educated than he; the language is constructed in a way that does not seem to suit his way of putting things; the climate is more trying than that of his own country. To use an illustration, he was trained to fly and he must swim. He must swim or sink; he must either be absorbed into American life or suffer the fate that trees suffer when they are transplanted from their native region to another and cannot acclimatize themselves. That does not mean the obliteration of his Italian nature. I am speaking of the future of Italians in America "en masse," not as individuals. In entering into American life, in adopting Anglo-Saxon ways and the English language, the Italian will bring into American life his Latin characteristics, which will contribute toward the development of this country. "When an Italian becomes a loyal citizen of another country, he works out his individual salvation there, and lets his own native force make him the predominant element in it."* His patience, his artistic feeling, his emotional temperament, his anti-puritanical

*Italy Today, Bolton King.

spirit, his shrewdness, his instinctive knowledge of human nature, his love of family and country, will undoubtedly prove to be an equalizing and perfecting element in the future generations of Americans.

America will find in its citizens of Italian extraction staunch upholders of democratic principles. "The modern Italian is at heart and by instinct a democrat. Italian democracy is not aggressive, nor, except perhaps among a small and noisy band of advanced socialists, is it at all inclined to accept the untenable theory that all men are equals. That courtesy of manner and speech which is inherent in the true Latin races is equally to be found in all classes of the Italian community, at all events so far as their ordinary dealings with a stranger are concerned—even if this stranger be one of themselves. The offhand, scarcely veiled insolence of manner and bearing which the Briton of modern times so often assumes in order to demonstrate his ideas of social equality could not, I think, be found even among the roughest of Italian workmen imbued with republican or socialistic principles."†

Almost all Italians come to America with the intention of staying two or three years and then going back to Italy to live, with a little money. They generally do go back, but, having lost the taste for life in a small village, having drunk the somewhat unclean

†Italians of Today, R. Bagot.

waters of a large American city, they come to America again, and this time with the intention of settling here. They still have no way of entering into the American life, while in many cases, as I have said, they are afraid of American life from the little they have seen of it.

There should be in the large foreign colonies organized lectures, clubs, stereoptican lectures, distribution of information, both in Italian and in English, to explain and to instruct in regard to American history, laws, institutions, and ideals. There should be free courses on a university extension plan for Italian professional men, with a view to preparing them to expound to their people in the right way the principles and standards of American life. A regular and carefully carried out campaign should be started in the Italian newspapers, with well-written articles by leading men on the subject of American life, and a careful censorship of Italian newspapers should be established to challenge every article that is unduly depreciatory of America.

Churches should be centres where American volunteers of the best kind can in deed and word represent their country to the foreigner. Churches furnish a good means to bring about Americanization. Italians are apt to move from place to place and those who become attached to Evangelical churches, besides the good which they

eventually get in their own churches, are also brought into contact with American congregations, who by their example initiate them into the ways of American life.

A campaign to enlighten the immigrant as to his duties towards his new country should be started on a somewhat different basis from those already tried. The immigrant is often made to feel how great the material advantage is for him in becoming an American citizen and thus is trained to enter into American public and political life in a mercenary spirit. When I applied for citizenship papers, I received this letter from the Bureau of Naturalization, Washington, D. C.:

"Dear Sir:

"You have just filed your petition for naturalization to become a citizen of the United States, and because of this the United States Bureau of Naturalization is sending this letter to you, as it desires to show you how you can become an American citizen. It also wants to help you to get a better position that pays you more money for your work. In order to help you better yourself it has sent your name to the public schools in your city, and the superintendent of those schools has promised to teach you the things which you should know to help you to get a better position. If

you will go to the public school building nearest where you live the teacher will tell you what nights you can go to school and the best school for you to go to. You will not be put in a class with boys and girls, but with grown people. It will not cost you anything for the teaching which you will receive in the school, and it will help you get a better job and also make you able to pass the examination in court when you come to get your citizen's papers.

"You should call at the schoolhouse as soon as you receive this letter so that you may start to learn and be able to get a better job as soon as possible.

"Very truly yours,

N. N."

As you see, four times there occurs in this letter the exhortation to become a citizen and to learn the English language in order to get "a better job." The letter contains not a single appeal to higher motives nor a reference to the duties and responsibilities of American citizenship, yet it is sent to every foreigner who applies for citizenship. I think a letter of this kind is demoralizing. I wonder whether America is better off for exhorting foreigners to become its citizens from such motives, or whether it would not be more desirable to instruct immigrants carefully on the altruis-

tic side as to the duty of sharing the responsibilities of American life.

It may be worth mentioning that thirty years of residence in the city of Rome is required of any man, even of Italian birth, in order to become a Roman citizen.

Human nature, fortunately, is always longing for an appeal to its best side. I accompanied a friend when the American citizenship was granted to him. The judge, a man with a fine, clean-cut face, turned toward the candidates—there were about a hundred in the room—and told the story of the Pilgrim Fathers who, although starved and in great distress, refused the opportunity of going back to England, where religious and political freedom was denied them. The words were to me an inspiration and in glancing around I saw the faces of those present light up and show signs of emotion. Big Irishmen, heavy-faced Slavs, small, dried-up Jews, dark Italians, small-headed Greeks, I could see in the eyes of them all the light of men who were seeing a vision. The appeal to the best there is in man should be the leading thought in educating immigrants to a desire for American citizenship.

The matter of taking out American citizenship papers is complicated by the lack of international understanding, which gives to the foreigner who comes to America from a country where conscription is enforced the feeling that he is either a man without a

country or one with two countries. No matter how long an Italian stays in America, with what sincerity of heart he takes up citizenship there, he will always be considered by the Italian Government an Italian citizen with the duty of serving in the Italian army. This is also true for the sons of the Italian immigrant, even when born in America. If the Italian immigrant and his sons choose not to answer the call of the Italian Government, he and his sons cannot visit Italy without running the danger of being arrested, and they lose the right of inheritance if ever a will is made in their favor in Italy. The Italian Government is not to blame; it is only a matter of international understanding that has not yet been taken up by the federal authorities. The American citizen of Italian extraction feels that he has the same right to visit Italy without encountering difficulties as his fellow-citizen of Anglo-Saxon extraction, and keenly resents the fact that America has not provided the means of defending him when his rights as the citizen of a free country are encroached upon.

A few months ago the American newspapers told of the case of a gentleman, born of an Italian father and an English mother. In order to avoid for himself and his children the stumbling block of being a citizen claimed by two countries for certain duties, and also in order to avert the race prejudice

which falls more or less upon Americans who have Italian names, he asked the state to let him give up his father's name and call himself by the English name of his mother. So far as the main issue was concerned that did not change matters. This gentleman and his children will always be Italians to the Italian Government, which will require from them the same duties as before the change of name if ever it succeeds in getting hold of them. Would an Englishman, a Scotchman, or an Irishman be in great haste to take out his American papers if he knew that, if ever his business or his pleasure should lead him or his children into any part of the British Empire, there would be danger of imprisonment and compulsory military service, and that America could not help him, having provided no international law to cover his case? I think that now, during the war, when this problem is in its acute stage, the federal authorities should take it up and solve it once and forever.

The second generation needs special attention on the part of the best Americans, for to it belong those who stand in the greatest need of guidance. They are neither fish nor flesh. They have not the traditions and the love of the old country and they imperfectly possess the traditions and love of the new one. They may cry "Hooray for America" and be ever ready to display an American flag, but I am afraid

that there is in such acts the clamorous attitude of the parvenu, who, knowing himself weak in regard to ancestral claims, is constantly and loudly referring to the greatness of his forefathers. The young men and women of the second generation have no love for heroes like Garibaldi, Mazzini and Cavour, and on the other hand they have a vague and troubled feeling that the heroes who gave their lives to make America were men of another race. It may be to quiet that feeling that they sing louder than the others "Land where my fathers died."

The result with Italians whose Americanization is brought about too rapidly is the same as with other races. An expert on Japanese life was telling me recently that the average Japanese who adopts American ways rapidly loses his racial courtesy and becomes blunt to the point of becoming offensive. The Italian youth of the second generation oftentimes loses the simplicity, the temperance, the love of family, and the spirit of economy of his father without acquiring the generosity, the soberness of habits, the truthfulness, the sense of justice and the respect for the law of the true American. Grazia Deledda, an Italian writer, calls this degeneration "the changing of the simple, natural man into a modern barbarian." It is dangerous to give generous wine to a teetotaler. Races are not changed in one generation. American freedom is

dangerous to youth of Latin blood. That is why, according to experts on immigration questions, the second generation is the one which should be most carefully trained. They represent the period of transition, they are at a critical stage of development similar to that of adolescence.

The public school trains the youth of the second generation, but the public school cannot take the place of home and religious training. The children of foreign extraction learn English and, as very little is done in school to make them keep up the language of their parents, they soon forget it, with the result that their home life is destroyed. I know of many families where the parents cannot understand what the children say and the gentle influence of home life is thus lost. Besides, in the public school the child of foreign extraction is made to feel by the other children, and sometimes by the teachers, that he is a superior little being because he was born here while his father and mother are just "Waps" and "Dagos." It is sad to notice the patronizing attitude that the child assumes towards his father and mother after a few months in the public school. The mother may be ignorant and primitive but she has the love of a mother in her heart and she can teach patience, purity and honesty to the child. The father may not know English and may be rough, but he is work-

ing hard to educate his child and his strong arm is ever ready to defend him. All the beautiful and lasting influence represented by mother, father and home is destroyed just because the child is made to look down upon his parents as inferior beings, he being "an American." When I discuss this matter with teachers in public schools, I become aware that they possess a holy horror of teaching children the language and history of Italy. In my opinion the way to preserve the home life of the children of immigrants is to teach through the language and history of their fathers that in every country the great men and women have always been ready to sacrifice their personal interest for the sake of their country. By making these children realize that they are connected by blood with a race of glorious traditions and by adoption have come to belong to a country which has also a glorious past, the love for America will be kept in their hearts without their acquiring a feeling of contempt for their fathers' country.

The innumerable clubs which are organized for young people in connection with all types of social work among immigrants are doing a great work in training the second generation to love and respect justice and honor. Unfortunately they help also to deepen the gulf between parents and children.

Unintentionally those clubs tend to train

the young Italian boys and girls to stay out of the home almost every evening and to mix freely together. This may be very proper for other races, but I have had the opinion of many priests and ministers as to the results of this system among Italians and it was not very encouraging. The club-trained Italian boys and girls are easily recognized by the ease with which they get married and divorced, by their unwillingness to stay and take care of their home after they are married, by their almost insane desire to be incessantly out for "a good time," and by their lack of respect for their old people. This would not be the case if clubs were so organized as to include both the young people and their parents, keeping thus the whole family together, on the same social plane.

The church also should adapt itself both to the older and to the younger generation. Trinity Church in New York grew rapidly because it was attended by young Dutch men and women who, wishing to have services in English and not having such services provided in their own church, flocked to Trinity Church. Services in Italian for those who do not understand English and services in English for the young people should be provided, yet the wise pastor will urge parents and children to share one another's church services, and the principal service on Sunday should be alternately in

English and in Italian, with the whole family attending it. This plan should be kept up until the flood of Italian immigration ceases.

The war will be a great factor in solving the problem of the Americanization of Italians. Thousands of young men of Italian extraction have volunteered in the United States Army and Navy. Thousands more will join the colors while the war goes on. To fight for a flag and a country is the strongest and most powerful way to make a man love that country. These fighting men will come back to their homes Americans every inch of them, and will leaven the rest of the young men in the neighborhoods where they live.

To sum up, let me warn my reader of the danger which lurks behind the question of Americanization: that of "rushing things." During the coming years, judging by the talk about "hyphens" that is going on, America will hasten to assimilate its foreign elements. The danger will lie in assimilating too quickly material that is in too raw a state. It is well to remember that it took the early Anglo-Saxon settlers about two hundred years to realize that they were Americans and even then many preferred to fight for the privilege of remaining British subjects. The process of Americanization should be one of slow and natural evolution; in hastening it there is danger of

making it an artificial and unhealthy process which will produce a type of citizenship such as reminds one of the body of an abnormally grown boy: plenty of legs and neck but weakness in the lungs and heart. It is better to control, direct and educate the foreign element than to be partially controlled by it. It is better to make a foreigner look upon American citizenship as a prize to be won by service and devotion to his new country than to throw it at him as a thing of no value. The proverb warns that: "Haste trips up its own heels."

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGION OF ITALIANS.

Italians in the primitive church.—Italian faith in the Middle Ages.—The Waldensian movement.—Three classes of religious Italians.—Italians and the clergy.—The clergy and education.—The clergy and morality.—The "Questione Romana."—Italy and the Bible.—Modernism.—Mazzini and spiritual Italy.—The religious life of Italians in America.—Magic and folklore.—Indifferents.—Free Thinkers.—Opportunities.

Erasmus said: "Itali omnes athei."

Carducci, the poet, was inclined to think that Italians were all pagan in the classical sense.

Romolo Murri, the modernist, wrote lately that with equal truth one might say: "Itali omnes clerici."

Ferdinand Martini, in our times, says, repeating the words of Tommaseo, that Italy is divided into unbelievers and lukewarm believers.

In reflecting upon the annals of the Church of Rome and of religious life throughout the history of Christianity, especially in the Middle Ages, and in observing the overwhelming part taken by Italians in the growth of both institutions, one is tempted to think that Italians were all priests, or at least a deeply religious people.

Undoubtedly the critical spirit of the Latin race gives the impression of its having sceptical tendencies, and allowance must be

made for human nature and personal ambition which would explain many of the motives that prompted Italians to work for the church; indisputably there is still imbedded in the depths of the Italian soul a substratum of traditional paganism, of primitive culture and a belief in magic and folklore. Yet the fact remains that both within and without the Roman Catholic Church we have in Italy deep and strong currents of religious life and spiritual experience.

The Centurion of the time of Jesus who astonished the Master by his faith, Cornelius of the apostolic narrative, the Christians in Rome, whose faith, according to the Pauline letters, was known and admired throughout the whole world, are early examples of the religious spirit of Italians. Under the emperors' persecutions the Italian martyrs knew how to die for their Lord and Master. From Rome came missionaries filled with the evangelical spirit and with burning love who went out among the barbarians to carry the message of the Cross. The zeal of Gregory the Great prompted the sending of St. Augustine of Canterbury to christianize the Anglo-Saxons. Saintly men of the type of Lanfranc and Anselm were of Italian blood. Leaders who saved the mediaeval church and mediaeval society from disintegration, such as Joachim of Floris, Francis of Assisi, and Catherine of Siena, were children of this race of supposed

atheists. The religious history of Italy can claim as its own reformers of the prophet-martyr type, Arnold of Brescia and Savonarola, and scholars of a philosophical turn of mind, such as Marsilius of Padua, Bernardino Ochino, Pietro Martire and Giordano Bruno.

It was four hundred years before the Reformation in Northern Europe that the Waldensian movement, that is, the Italian Reformation, started in Italy. The founder of the Italian branch of the Waldensian movement was Arnold of Brescia, born in Lombardy about 1100, a man of ardent piety, but also of a practical turn of mind, who had sat at the feet of Abelard. He preached against the corruption and the simony of the clergy and the secularization of the church, wishing to restore it to its apostolic purity and poverty. Amidst the general corruption of the 12th century, he took up the cry of the poor, claiming the right of the people to govern themselves, proclaiming the principle that the church should be without temporal possessions and that the clergy, like Christ and the Apostles, should live upon the tithes and voluntary offerings of the faithful. Practising what he professed, he lived by begging his daily bread from house to house. He was burned at Rome in 1155. At his death a large number of his followers, called in the annals of the time Arnaldists, Lombards, or "Poor of

Lombardy,"—these names being taken either from their founder, or from the place in which they lived, or from the most prominent feature of their faith,—began soon to attract attention on account of their heretical views and their simplicity of life. They grew in numbers so rapidly that at the Council of Verona in 1184 they were put under perpetual anathema by Pope Lucius III, and in 1224 Frederick the Second, desiring to get into the good graces of the Pope, swore to exterminate them.

Notwithstanding all these persecutions, they increased their missionary efforts, joined with the "Poor of Lyons," incorporated "Gli Umiliati," paved the way for the Franciscan movement, and under the common name of Waldensians sent missionaries to Bohemia, Austria and Germany. They had great influence in preparing the way for the Franciscan movement. They also paved the way for the reformation in Bohemia under John Huss. The Waldensian doctrines were widely disseminated in Bavaria, Austria and Bohemia before John Huss's movement. The first translation of the Gospels into German was made by Waldensians and was used later on by Martin Luther in his new German edition of the Bible.

Throughout the centuries the Waldensian Church withstood persecution and it is now doing important work in Italy. The Italians

of Evangelical faith in Italy number more than 175,000 persons. Almost another million in the census taken in Italy in 1911 were stated to be without religion. About 17,000 Sicilians and 15,000 Apulians call themselves Protestant. The number of those of the Evangelical faith has increased by a hundred per cent in the last ten years (1901-1911.)*

Is the Italian of today a religious being? The views of a superficial observer are well described by a leading Roman priest, Father G. Bartoli, in the introduction to "The Religion of the Italian." "Many," he writes, "of the foreign Roman Catholics who are accustomed to live in their own country where the majority are Protestants, when they come to Italy and see religious festivities, processions, imposing ceremonies and spectacular celebrations in honor of Madonnas and Saints, draw their conclusions and say: 'Thank God, we are at last living in a perfectly Christian country. Italians are really religious!' A certain type of zealous Anglican to whom the smoke of incense or the cassock of an acolyte at the altar seem the true expression of deep religious feeling, find themselves happy in Italy and think Italians deeply religious. Other Protestant tourists, seeing Italians crowd the streets and places of amusement on Sunday, and hearing them cursing im-

* Annuario Statistico Italiano, Roma, 1915.

partially the saints and the priest, draw the conclusion that Italians are unbelievers or worse."

I know that what follows may seem to many to express extreme and sectarian views. I have a feeling of deep respect and devotion toward the Roman Church and I am well aware of the great spiritual influence which this church has had through the centuries on my fellow-countrymen and on the rest of the world. From its saints, modern and ancient, I have received spiritual teaching. The spirit of sacrifice, obedience and devotion of its humble servants is ever there to testify to the living stream of God, the Spirit that giveth life. Yet I am called upon to describe existing conditions and that I shall endeavor to do, repeating the words of Richard Bagot to his critics: "In nearly every case the statements I made on this particular subject, and the conclusions I drew from them, were directly obtained from [Roman] priests of my acquaintance, some of these being of humble rank, ministering to peasant populations, and others high dignitaries of the [Roman] Church."

I wish to remind my readers that I am examining the conditions of the Roman Church particularly in Southern Italy and that I realize that in other places, and especially in countries where the non-Roman Catholic element is large, conditions may be

far better and very different. Even a brief sojourn spent in touch with the people in small places in Sicily, Calabria, or the Abruzzi, would be sufficient to make every student of the subject realize how sorrowfully true are the religious conditions that I undertake to describe.

On the subject of religion in modern Italy we may divide Italians into three classes:

1. The devout Roman Catholics, the majority of whom consist of peasants, largely illiterate. They simply believe in the external miracles and mysteries of the Church, without having any understanding either of its moral aspect or of its political ambitions. Even among the peasants in these later years the socialistic movement, which in Italy is anti-religious and materialistic in its tendencies, has drawn away a multitude of these devout believers. The results of this propaganda are dreadful. Violence, hatred, jealousy, egotism, and a morbid unrest follow the path of the anti-religious agitators. As another writer has remarked, "while Anglo-Saxons and Teutons if deprived of all their religious faith may remain good citizens and worthy members of their community, those belonging to the Latin races, unless they happen to be highly educated or naturally law-abiding individuals, are apt to become anything but desirable elements of a state." *

*The Italians of Today, by Richard Bagot, page 67.

In the class of devout Roman Catholics should be put the so-called "black aristocracy," which, however, is growing weaker, as is shown in the decreasing number of noblemen who give themselves up to an ecclesiastical career.

2. A smaller number of agnostics, materialists, freethinkers, and atheists, who are for the most part workingmen in large cities or professional men (doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc.). This class is the result of the wave of positivistic philosophy that swept over Europe in the nineteenth century.

3. Lastly, the most numerous are the apparently indifferent, that is, millions of all classes who seem to go through life without religious feeling or spiritual experience. These people will allow their children to be baptized in the Roman Church because "it is the traditional thing to do," and for the same reason they will get married in the church, but there all outward religious manifestation ceases.

There are, of course, other groups, but they are rather insignificant factors in the national life compared with the above-mentioned groups. Common to all classes, even to the Roman Catholics, is a suspicious attitude toward the clergy. The half-educated type of priests, often of low morals and of greedy disposition, is not uncommon. There appeared only a few months

ago, in "La Nuova Riforma," a magazine published by Prof. Gennaro Avolio of Naples, two articles written by a leading member of the Church of Rome on the wretched conditions existing in the religious seminaries of Italy. This statement is there made: "Among the Calabrian clergy as well as among nine-tenths of the Roman priests all over Italy there exists an appalling ignorance. They are kept outside of the great intellectual movement of modern life. The professors in the seminaries are often appointed on account of their unquestioning subservience to the Church." The standards of classical and scientific preparation in these seminaries are so low that the Italian government does not recognize as sufficient for college entrance the diploma of graduation which the seminaries grant to young men as an indication of their possessing sufficient education for ordination to the priesthood. Father Bartoli, once director of the famous Roman Catholic paper "La Civiltà Cattolica," thus writes: "The training given by Italians to the Italian Roman Catholic priest resembles very closely the treatment of girls in China; the life in the seminary does not dwarf the feet of the young students, but their brains. Ninety-eight per cent of the theological students come from the mountains or poor mountainous districts and so far as broadness of views is concerned most of them are worth

less than zero. Their philosophical and theological system, which is inspired and colored by mediaeval conceptions, tends to decrease the value of the already poor material." Luigi Villari adds on this subject, with some exaggeration perhaps: "The Italian clergy are in the mass quite uneducated. The average priest knows little beyond reading and writing, and he is often shaky at that." *

The learned and suave Italian prelates that one meets in Rome and abroad are specially trained men and do not, by any means, represent the Italian priesthood in general. The moral status of the priests is so low that it is almost a disgrace to receive a priest socially. Prof. Alexander Robertson in his book "The Roman Catholic Church in Italy" testifies to the fact by saying: "This social ostracism of the priest struck me very much when we were staying with some friends at a provincial town near Milan. In the course of a week or two we had met all the people of any status in the place, but never a priest, though my host used occasionally to go to church. At last I remarked on the fact to our hostess, who replied, 'Oh, nobody receives a priest. Any one doing so would fall in public estimation. It would be considered not only unpatriotic, but immoral.' Ladies may receive as many

*Italian Life in Town and Country, Luigi Villari, New York, 1902.

officers as they please and little would be said or thought about it, but that they should receive a priest would create a scandal. The army stands in this respect far above the Church." Luigi Villari, himself a Roman Catholic, wrote lately: "The priest who is guilty of immoral practices will not receive preferment, but he is by no means always punished, and on many occasions the Government has had to intervene to procure his dismissal." *

A family connection of mine, a priest of the Roman Church, until lately a professor in one of the colleges in Rome, on returning from a visit to England, remarked that one of the agreeable surprises of English life was the respect shown to clergymen. "Why some of them even took their hats off when I walked about! Here in Rome a priest can scarcely take a walk in a public place without being insulted." This may seem to you an exaggeration, but we Italians know that it is a fact. It is well known that the priests of the Church of England were held in very low esteem by the English during the so-called "fox hunting time." The same conditions and worse exist today in Italy and that explains why in the land of the Pope the least respected person is the priest. Of course there are scores of priests whose lives, inspired by a true evangelical

*Italian Life in Town and Country, Luigi Villari, New York, 1902.

spirit, are a source of help and comfort to numberless souls. The simple and the humble quickly detect them and the respect and love with which they surround them is a sure sign of the good work that they are accomplishing in their ministry.

The feeling amounting almost to hatred toward the clergy that surprises and shocks the average tourist is also prompted by the unpatriotic attitude that the Vatican and its adherents assume on the question of the temporal power of the Papacy. The above-mentioned writer in "La Nuova Riforma" says: "It is not uncommon for the 'Questione Romana,' that is, the subject of the temporal power of the Pope, to be agitated in the pulpit." The hostile attitude of the Vatican toward the Government and the ruling House of Savoy caused it to go so far as to forbid the tolling of church bells when the body of the late king, Humbert First, was brought to Rome. The only bells that tolled were those of the American Episcopal Church and those of the Methodist Church. Even during this dreadful war the Pope, who had no words of blame for the massacre of the Belgians or the sinking of the Lusitania, has aroused a great deal of feeling in Italy by protesting against the Italian government's taking the necessary precautions of war in regard to the foreign ambassadors to the Holy See. The scandalous trial of Mgr. Gerlach, private secretary of

the Pope, found guilty of having been involved in the conspiracy that caused the loss of the battleship Saint George; the attitude of the Vatican press in favor of the Central Powers; and many other similar circumstances have done much lately to increase the bitterness of patriotic Italians toward the Curia.

Macchiavelli first and Mazzini later rightly stated that the unworthy and simoniacal priests were the cause of atheism and irreligion in Italy. Listen to what the well-known Lamennais, who was a Roman Catholic priest, has to say on the question: "There is no power on earth that surpasses or equals that of the clergy, when they are imbued with the genius of a nation, and guide it in its natural progress according to the laws that direct the procession of its life. But if by error or from interest they set themselves in opposition to those eternal laws, if they attempt to hold the people in a state which it knows to be not good, and so block the road to the future, they lose thereby the power they had. Their words excite mistrust, they are involved in the hate born of the evil they have tried to perpetuate, and the people regard them as their enemy. Once they lived by the love the people gave them for their own trust in it; now faith and love have vanished, their living force is spent, and voices of scorn and curs-

ing are the only obsequies that follow their dishonored bier."

And the great patriot Mazzini, in an address to Italian patriots and the Italian clergy, thus comments upon Lamennais' words:

"By opposing national ideals of liberty and freedom you are fighting against Christ, against God, and against Humanity."

The pivot on which the mighty movement of the English Reformation revolved was the national spirit of the English people which resented the interference of a foreign element, the Papacy, in their national life. The bitterness toward the clergy and the church so universally to be found in Italy has its source largely in the feeling that spiritual leaders should not interfere in political affairs, much less oppose the development of the national life.

This does not at all imply that Italians are not religious. Italians may not keep the Sabbath day, may go to church but once in their whole life, may despise the clergy and reject the teaching of the church, and yet be religious.

The Bible is still a closed book to the majority of Italians. Among the peasants the Bible is a book to be burned as soon as one lays his hand on it. Four years ago two Waldensian colporters were stoned in a Sicilian village and barely escaped with their lives because they were guilty of sell-

ing the Gospels. The local priest had preached that they were selling witchcraft books. Here is a scene from mediaeval life in the midst of the twentieth century!

In all other ranks of Italian society, with a few honorable exceptions, there is a vague knowledge of what the Bible is, but one can go through the whole Peninsula and find scarcely one among a hundred thousand who ever reads it as a whole or in part.

There is an Italian translation of the Bible, made by Cardinal F. Martini, Archbishop of Florence, which has been published in two forms; one so large and so costly that the people cannot buy it, and the other so small and so illegible that nobody would care to have it.

Mr. Austin West, in the "Contemporary Review" for April, 1902, in an article on "The Abbé Loisy and the Roman Biblical Commission" says: "Throughout the length and breadth of Italy there is no sort of society for Biblical study. An Academy of this nature which once existed in Rome, under the presidency of Cardinal Parocchi at the Propaganda Palace, soon languished and died for lack of interest and encouragement; and all the recent efforts of Padre Lepidi, who summoned a conference at the Vatican last May to found another in its stead, were doomed to failure. Can this be wondered at when in fact, there is no chair of Biblical Criticism in the Roman Ecclesi-

astical Schools and when at the Gregorian and Minervan Universities (to cite only two instances) none of the two thousand and odd Church students who flock thither annually are ever examined in Biblical knowledge nor is any standard of proficiency demanded even from the selected group who go forth decorated as Bachelors and Doctors of Theology?"

A young Italian student at the University of Rome, interested in the Good Book, began to inquire among his fellow students about their attitude toward the Bible. He was amazed and humiliated to find the profound ignorance of his fellow-students in regard to the Bible. They knew a thousand petty details about minor insignificant ancient works of doubtful literary and moral value; but about the Bible they seemed to know less than nothing and to have the right to be thus ignorant. "I did not expect or require of my fellow-students that deep veneration for the Bible that I had in my heart, but I should have liked at least to have them possess a knowledge of it such as might reasonably be expected in regard to a hundred books of less literary importance than the Bible."

Dr. Agide Pirazzini, now Professor of Hebrew in the Bible Teachers' Training School, New York, while living in Rome, saw one day displayed in a store window a big open book. He stopped and read the

two open pages. He was so impressed with what he read that for weeks he went every day to the window of the store to read the two new pages that were displayed each morning. The store was one of the Bible Centres of the British Bible Society. He finally went inside the store and bought a copy of the Bible. He had never heard of it and thought himself very fortunate to possess such a marvelous book of religious knowledge, believing himself to be the only person in Italy to own it; and yet he was living in an intellectual atmosphere, in the capital of Italy, the city of the Pope. It was only a few years afterwards that, entering a Waldensian church, he found brethren who had the same book and the same faith. One of the most needed works, and one which would have far-reaching and lasting results, is the dissemination of a knowledge of the Bible among the university students of Italy.

There is such a longing for a knowledge of the Scriptures among Italians that when Pope Leo XIII granted permission to the Society of St. Jerome, headed by Mgr. Della Chiesa, to publish the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, about a million copies were sold in less than three months. Unfortunately the following Pope, Pius X, fearing the results that the reading of the Gospels might bring, suppressed their publication. Mgr. Della Chiesa has now become the su-

preme head of the Roman Church and has granted full powers once more to the Society of St. Jerome.

Some time ago a priest, on visiting one of his parishioners, found him reading in his Bible. He explained to the poor Irishman that it was useless and dangerous for a layman to read the Bible. The man would not agree to this, and asked the priest for whom the Bible was written.

"Ah," said the priest, "the Bible is for us priests and not for you unlearned people."

"Is that so?" answered the Irishman. "I read in my Bible that parents should teach the Word of God to their children, and priests have no children."

"But, Mike," said the priest, "you cannot understand the Bible; it was not written for such people as you are."

"Ah, your reverence, whatever I cannot understand will do me no harm; and what I do understand does me a world of good."

"Look here, Mike," said the priest, "you ought to go to church, and the Church will instruct you. The Church will give you the milk of the Word of God."

"Yes, but where does the Church get this milk? It gets it from the Bible, doesn't it? Ah, reverence, pardon me, but it is an old experience that those who handle milk often adulterate it. I'd rather have my own cow."

When Italians get possession of the Word of God, they feel that no power on earth can lead them astray in regard to religion, for they reason as did the Irishman just mentioned.

The man who can rightly be hailed as the prophet of Italians in America, Mr. Michele Nardi, was converted to Christ by reading the word of God. He was a successful business man and America had given him the opportunity of making large sums of money. One day a business man told him that he was ready to sign a contract by which Mr. Nardi would profit, on condition that he would read a chapter out of the book that he was going to give him. Mr. Nardi pledged his word and put the book into his pocket. When he went home he kept his word and read the third chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. It was the first time that the New Testament had been placed in his hands. That night Mr. Nardi did not go to bed, but through struggle and prayer he gave his heart to Jesus Christ. A few weeks later he sold his business and retired for a whole winter to a small house in the woods near Pittsburg, spending his time in prayer, meditation and study of the Gospels. He came out of this period of preparation a man baptized by the Holy Ghost and Mr. Nardi became God's instrument in establishing and founding hundreds of missions

and churches among his countrymen, from California to Maine.

A spiritual revival is now beginning in Italy and it shows itself in many ways. Modernism as an organized movement has failed, but it has prompted hundreds of young priests to study the Scriptures in the light of modern research; it has linked the clergy once more to the intellectual laity, at least in the cities; it has fostered a deep spiritual awakening in the hearts of thousands of men, clerical and lay; and it has called the attention of the Italian government to the importance of religious studies. The Society Fides et Amor, which aims at the triumph of the Kingdom of God through the spreading of the Gospel of Christ in Italy and in countries where the Italian language is spoken, is reaching numberless Italians. A small army of scholars has recently called the attention of Italians to the importance of religious subjects.

The Italians wanted bread and received a stone; hence they refuse food from the hands of those who have deceived them. Through honest lives, by higher family ideals, by service to their country, by work and struggle they are serving God, though there is a lack of the conventional religious atmosphere in their lives and the churches are deserted.

Let me here quote once more the inspiring words of Mazzini: "The religious spirit

never departed from Italy as long as she remained, in spite of her divisions, great and active; but it departed from her in the sixteenth century when Florence had fallen and all the liberty of Italian life had been crushed by the foreign arms of Charles V and the deceit of the Popes and we began to lose our national character and to live as if we were Spaniards, Germans and French. Then our learned men began to play the buffoon to princes, and to stimulate their listless patrons by laughing at everybody and at everything. Then our priests seeing that any application of religious truth was impossible, began to traffic in holy things, and to think of themselves, not of the people whom they ought to have enlightened and protected. And the people, despised by the learned, deceived and fleeced by the priests, banished from any influence in public matters, began to revenge themselves by deriding the learned, distrusting the priests, and rebelling against all creeds, since they perceived that the old one was corrupt and were not able to look beyond it. From that time forward we have dragged ourselves along, in abjectness and impotence, between the superstition imposed upon us by habit, or by our governors, and incredulity. But we want to rise again, great and honored. And we will remember the national traditions. We will remember that with the name of God on their lips and with

the symbols of their faith in the center of the battle, our Lombard brothers in the twelfth century vanquished the German invaders and reconquered the liberty wrested from them. We will remember that the republicans of the Tuscan cities held their parliaments in the churches. We will remember the Florentine artisans who refused to submit their democratic liberty to the domination of the house of Medici, and by solemn vote elected Christ as head of the Republic; and the friar Savonarola preaching in the same breath faith in God and the rights of the people, and the Genoese of 1746, who with stones for weapons and in the name of the Virgin Mary, their patron saint, liberated their city from the German army which occupied it; and a whole chain of other deeds like these in which the religious thought protected and fertilized the popular thought of Italy. And the religious sentiment sleeps in our people, waiting to be awakened. He who knows how to rouse it will do more for the nation than can be done by twenty political theories. Perhaps it is the lack of this sentiment in the imitators of the foreign monarchical constitutions in Italy, as much as the lack of an openly popular purpose, which is responsible for the coldness with which the people have till now regarded these attempts. Preach, therefore, O brothers, in the name of God. He who has an Italian heart will follow you."

No matter how doubtful the religious future of Italy may be, one thing is certain: Italy will never become Protestant. When the Italian layman shall awake from his apathy, shall stop considering the subject of the Church as "storie da preti," and shall stand shoulder to shoulder with the young, inspired and learned faction of the Clergy, then a liberal Catholicism, imbued with a spirit of democracy and patriotism, will bring about a renewal of the spiritual life of the land of the Papacy. It will produce "a liberal form of Catholicism, which, while it would be excommunicated by the Pope, would not respond by excommunicating him; while not actually denying anything in the old Catholicism, would permit of its free development."* A reformed Christianity in its cold and divided forms such as are found in Protestantism in general, or a semi-philosophical school of thought such as Unitarianism, will never appeal to an emotional, esthetic race like the Latin race as a whole. Furthermore, Italians, though some of them may not admit it, are proud of the power, the history, and the achievements of the Roman Church, and are willing to forget all the unpleasant past if a good occasion is offered to them. No matter to how great an extent Italians may become anti-clericals they are not at all anti-Catholics; the dream

*Don Romolo Murri, Harvard Theological Review, October, 1916, page 379.

of making Italy a Presbyterian, a Methodist, or a Unitarian country will always remain a dream. Courses on the History of Religions, Church History, and Biblical Studies in the government universities and lectures, clubs, and magazines on religious topics may do much to awaken the Italian laity to its spiritual needs, but all this must not savor of sectarianism or it will accomplish very little.

The religious conditions of Italians in America reflect those existing in Italy. Every Sunday there is a group of young men shooting craps on the other side of the street from a certain church during the service. I spoke to some of them one day and the answer was, "You have no right to talk to us about anything, for you are a Protestant and we are Christians." I found out that they were all Knights of Columbus and were all attending mass faithfully early every Sunday morning and spending the rest of the day in swearing, gambling, and fighting. Every corner of the Italian colony has a small group of young men of that type.

There were two Sicilian spinsters boarding with the family of a professional man, devout Roman Catholics, rising early every morning to attend mass before going to work. Humble and modest, they were leading a sweet Christian life. They possessed all the virtues and failings of the narrowest type of Roman Catholic. They believed that

outside of their church there was no salvation; they were afraid to look me in the face for fear of receiving some evil influence.

I used to see an Italian come regularly to prayer meeting in a city of the Middle West; I have seldom met a man of a deeper spiritual nature. He was a Roman Catholic, with no desire to leave his own church, a splendid type of a Christian man, full of virtues and love. Though of little education, he was very broad in his views, broad enough to come for spiritual food to a prayer meeting in a Protestant church.

The bulk of the immigration to America consists of Italian peasants of Southern Italy; they represent the most faithful sons of the Roman Catholic Church. The preceding three types make up the Italian Roman Catholic element in our colony, the first being the most common and the last the most seldom found.

One who lives all his life in the heart of the Italian colonies of America is continually surprised at the primitive stage of religious development that still exists among some types of immigrants. In all the leading colonies of America there are magicians, male and female, who are living, and some of them thriving, upon the credulity of their countrymen. Girls who wish to get married purchase of them an elixir to make young men fall in love; mothers who wish their children to be healthy consult the

"fattucchiera" and follow her prescriptions. In Philadelphia I ran across a very striking case of sympathetic magic. A woman had been wronged by a man who refused to marry her. She told him that she was going to compel him to marry her by the power of the "fattura." On Christmas Eve at midnight she went to mass and before going to the altar rail to partake of the Holy Communion, she spat thrice on the floor of the church and repeated the formula of the renunciation of Christ:

"Cristo, Cristiello,
"Tu sei buono, ma è più buono quello."
("Christ, little Christ,
"Thou art good, but he [the Devil] is better.")

Then she went forward, kept the wafer in her mouth till she was out of the church, put it in a little bag, tied it up with a string containing as many knots as the years of the man's age, and then deposited it in a vessel full of water. The idea was that the man would gradually sicken as the string became decomposed in the water and would eventually die when the knots of the string were all broken by decomposition. Of course the man, knowing what she had done and fearing evil results, began to feel sick by the power of auto-suggestion and proceeded to marry her.

Some time ago I was aroused in the middle of the night to call on a sick man who

had, for a short time, attended religious services at the mission. When I arrived at his bedside, it was to hear this man beg me to go to the nearest city and ask a certain old woman to come at once to his rescue. When I asked for the explanation, the man said that once before when he was tortured by the same disease, a form of rheumatism, this old woman, a powerful "maga," had stretched herself at full length on his body, murmured certain magic words, blown seven times on his face, and, behold, he was well.

It is not uncommon to see crosses in ink made on different parts of the bodies of children to cure them from all kinds of diseases, swelling of the glands, ear troubles, eruptions of the skin, and so on.

In Kansas City I used to know a peculiar little man who had a wooden statue of a saint which he kept in a stable. He would go and stare at the face of the statue for hours and fall into a kind of trance, real or feigned, I do not know which. The fact remains that he had always a long line of people waiting at his house who were willing to pay a substantial sum of money to hear what the saint had to say about their troubles. My little fellow had bought three houses and justified the saying that it is worth while to be the friend of a saint.

Saint worship is another form of superstition common among certain immigrants.

Every little village of Italy has one or two, or more, patron saints. When the peasant leaves his native village, he will forget everything but his patron saint. So far well and good. The trouble is that he makes all kinds of bargains with him, ranging from offering to burn a candle before the image of the saint if the latter will help him to carry out a business transaction, to promising to bring a twenty dollar bill when the statue of the saint is to be carried through the streets if he can have the honour of being one of the bearers. A good lady said in reply to my question as to whether she had gone to church on Easter, "I go to church on St. Anthony's Day. He is my favorite saint and is more powerful than Christ, for he has performed more miracles than he. Besides, he is so handsome." The most amusing part of it all is that if the saint by misfortune does not grant the request of his follower, the latter does not hesitate to curse him as a good-for-nothing. This is the stage of religious development reached by some of the people coming from a land overcrowded with priests, monks and nuns. Something must be the matter with these religious teachers if some of their pupils are still in so elementary a state of religious belief.

Though the immigrant cannot explain clearly to himself his dissatisfaction with the religious food furnished him, his course

of action after he reaches America shows that he wishes for something better. In his village of Southern Italy a man may or may not believe, he may like or dislike the priest, he may be pleased with the teaching of the church or disgusted with it; but, as a rule, if he wishes to get on in life at all he must be outwardly a religious man. The priest is powerful, hand in glove with capitalism and with the local political power. It does not take long for the Italian immigrant to find out that things are different in America. Consequently he cuts loose from the church and draws a deep sigh of relief.

I am not exaggerating when I say that sixty per cent of Italian immigrants are completely free from the control of the Catholic Church after a few years of residence in America. Mgr. Pozzi, a leading prelate of the Roman Catholic Church in America, puts the percentage of Italians entirely without the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in America even higher. The Italian women are generally more faithful to their church than their husbands are, but there are, comparatively speaking, a small proportion of Italian women in America because half of the men are either unmarried or have left their wives in Italy. On the other hand, the Italian wife is either too busy with a large family or too docilely obedient to her husband's wishes even in religious matters to attend to her religious

duties. What will become of this class of Italians? A very few of them keep up their devotions privately, but the majority fall into indifference and limit themselves to a purely material life, working, eating, sleeping, saving money, and playing an occasional game of cards. It is a golden opportunity for the church which can succeed in awakening the spiritual forces which are asleep in their Latin souls. A number of Italians who, when they come to America, cease to go to church, go, however, to the other extreme. In the history of the West we read that young men of good New England families, when they had cut loose from home surroundings and influences, lived in the West loose and reckless lives. Something of the sort is the case with a portion of the Italians coming to this country; they go from too much belief to unbelief, and when they cut loose from old traditions, they acquire all the vices that American city life makes easy without acquiring the virtues. This circumstance is what makes religious work among Italians so appealing and so much needed.

Frequently among the half-educated and even among the professional men I find people calling themselves, with a note of pride in their voice, "liberi pensatori," free-thinkers. They speak with an air of commiseration of those who still go to church, and if they happen to be obliged to go to

church to attend a marriage or a funeral, they form a group in a corner, holding themselves aloof so as to make it clear to the people that they are bored to death and that they are there just to perform a social duty. There are exceptions to the rule, but generally this type is superstitious. One will not start on a journey on Friday or sit at table when there are thirteen guests. Practically all have a little bit of coral or some keys or a little grotesque silver figure attached to their watch chain to save them from ill fortune and the evil eye. One of the conspicuous figures in the Italian life of America, a lawyer and a man of the Italian nobility, has a little coral horn attached to his watch chain and believes that from it emanates the strength of his life and that it is the source of his good fortune, though, of course, he has no use for such nonsense as religion. Superstition is the step-daughter of a good mother, religion. Man is a religious being, and when he does not keep alive his spiritual strength by a sincere faith, because he cannot change his religious nature he often, unfortunately, takes refuge in superstition. Flattering himself that he is free from one kind of superstition, he falls into a real one.

To try to stir the fire of spiritual feeling which, notwithstanding appearances, still lies at the bottom of the Italian nature and manifests itself through superstitious be-

liefs such as I have described, is not a sectarian work. America as a nation offers to the Italian immigrant a new citizenship and a new country, so the American churches should offer to unchurched people a simple Christianity and a spiritual leadership.

CHAPTER IV.

CHURCHES AND MISSIONS IN AMERICA.

The Roman Church.—The Protestant Churches.—Protestant clergymen, their training, difficulties, and compensations.—Lady missionaries.—Sunday Schools.—Young People's services.—The Institutional Church.—The message of the Church.

In all the Italian colonies of the cities of America, except the very small ones, there is at least one Italian Roman Catholic church. I have met many of the Italian priests and I have found that the majority of them are earnest men, devoted to their work. It is fortunately no longer the custom to send to America priests who have committed some doubtful acts in their own village in Italy. American bishops of the Roman Church have put a stop to that. I have met Roman priests whose deep spiritual life was a source of joy and inspiration to me. The trouble is that many of them know next to nothing about America and they live a busy and isolated life in the Italian quarter. The majority of them being of peasant extraction, they possess a limited mentality and have all the prejudices of the Italian country priests against the branches of Christianity which are not under the Pope's authority. Last winter a friend of mine, a learned clergyman of the

Roman Church, told me that in dining with a group of Italian Roman Catholic priests he was surprised that a topic of their conversation which lasted more than an hour was "The Validity of the Mass Celebrated with Wine Unduly Sugared."

Newly-arrived immigrants, women and children, furnish the principal attendance of Italian Roman churches. A prominent layman of the Episcopal communion while in New York entered an Italian Roman Church to find it filled to the doors with men. At the end of the service he congratulated the priest on his good work, but he received a sad answer, "These men have just arrived from Italy; in six months very few, if any at all, will still come to church."

That wonderful organization, the Roman Church, is now planning to meet the need created by the flood of immigration. Young priests of Italian extraction trained in American seminaries are sent to Rome for a long period of time to complete their education and when they come back, are able to take care intelligently of a parish of mixed elements, because they can understand both the Italian and the American viewpoint and the languages of the two countries.

The parochial schools, with a small army of nuns as teachers, are rapidly educating future American Roman Catholics of the strictest type. The Roman Church among

Italians in America may have lost the father, but she is securing the children for herself through the parochial schools. They are not crying over spilled milk, but are securing a new supply. Even the Italian children who attend the public schools feel the influence of the Roman Church more or less through their zealous Roman Catholic teachers. The growing organization of the Knights of Columbus is swelling its ranks with recruits of Italian extraction, and the Roman Church is also taking care of immigrants by means of such societies as the San Raffaele, a kind of bureau for immigrants who land in America.

There are in America about four hundred Italian Protestant churches and missions, having a membership of more than twenty-five thousand Italians. The most important religious work among Italians is done by the Presbyterian Church, in big parishes like those of the Italian churches of Broome Street, Carlton Street, 106th Street, Harlem and Brooklyn in New York; also through the big churches in Philadelphia, Pittsburg and Chicago. The Presbyterian Board of Publication, furthermore, is printing the "Era Nuova," the most widely circulated Italian Evangelical newspaper in America. Of the seventy-six Italian Presbyterian churches and missions only ten are housed in a hall or store. Thirty-four have separate church buildings or chapels, and thirty-

two share the equipment of older American churches. In a number of city and suburban places new and beautiful buildings have been erected for Italian communities. Some of these churches have property valued at over a hundred thousand dollars and congregations running into the thousands who contribute largely to their support. It is, however, almost impossible to hope for material help from Italian congregations. The Italian congregations which contribute a large amount of money are the exception and the reason is to be found in peculiar conditions which may at any moment cease to exist. It takes about three years to bring an Italian who has joined the Evangelical Church to the point of realizing his responsibility toward the supporting of the church in the voluntary way which has been adopted in America. In Italy the church is a state institution and is, therefore, supported by the state, the faithful giving only on special occasions, such as baptisms, marriages, funerals, and the like, or when impelled by a strong feeling of sorrow or a fear of damnation. Every year the Italian Evangelical pastor in America loses one-third of his congregation, because Italians are constantly moving. They go back to Italy, or move to a better quarter where they join an American church, or they go to a new field to find work. In the space of three or four years every Italian congregation in Amer-

ica is almost completely renewed and the Italian pastor has constantly to seek new people who do not realize as yet their duty to give material help to the church. The Italian pastor is like a sculptor who is compelled to do the rough work of cutting a block and then when he is on the point of carving out the delicate lines of the figure has his work taken out of his hands and another rough block put in its place. Those to reap the benefit of his work will be the American churches, into whose fold the element prepared by the Italian work will enter.

Next in importance comes the Methodist Church, which is doing good, especially in small places, and has also large congregations in large cities.

The Baptists have a great many small missions, but are chiefly handicapped in their work by the unwillingness of Italians to be re-baptized.

The Protestant Episcopal Church is slowly awakening to a sense of responsibility toward newcomers, and here and there new work has been started and has proved successful. A few of the most important missions in the Episcopal Church are: the one connected with Grace Church, New York; San Salvatore of Broome Street, under the control of the City Mission of New York; Emmanuel Church, Philadelphia; and Christ Church, Boston.

Through the efforts of the Waldensian Aid Society of America a bureau of immigration for Italian Protestants has been established in New York, with agents in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Genoa, Naples, and Palermo.

The Bible Teachers' Training School in New York, Bloomfield Seminary and Colgate University in New Jersey have Italian departments for the training of young Italians for the ministry. There are about four hundred and fifty Italian missionaries in Evangelical work in the United States. Not more than twenty-five per cent of them have gone through regular college and seminary training and that accounts for the failure of some of the missions among Italians. Americans in their zeal to start Italian religious work—finding it difficult to raise a reasonable salary, such as would correspond to the "living wage" of the workingman,—think that they can get along with an insufficiently trained man, who will be satisfied with a small salary. A man who is to be the representative of Italians to America and the interpreter of America to his own people, should, if anything, be better trained than the average American minister. For how can a man who is scarcely able to speak English, understand and explain America to his countrymen? Or how can a man who until yesterday was living in an entirely different religious atmosphere, ex-

plain Christianity as we understand it in America, to the people who are swelling the ranks of American citizenship? Would it not be better to let the future minister develop for a few years by living in an Evangelical seminary and save him from a great many blunders? During my three years' theological course in New York about fifty Italian students followed the course; only two were graduated at the end of the three years; the others went out as colporters, missionaries, and assistant ministers, having no inclination and not sufficient education to finish their theological course and being more especially tempted to leave by the American churches, which were willing to employ them without their completing the course. In comparing the names on the list of my seminary catalogue with the list of Italian ministers in active service, I notice with regret that the majority of my fellow-students are no longer in the mission field. They were not well enough prepared and could not endure the hardships of a missionary's life.

Another drawback in Italian missionary work in America is the fact that more than half of the Italian ministers are ex-Roman Catholic priests. The larger number of these ex-priests are very good men, earnest and sincere, but there is a strong prejudice in many Italian hearts against the ex-Roman Catholic priest. He is looked upon

as a man who has become a traitor to the church which has educated and trained him, and if he is married the feeling against him is still stronger because his people do not easily trust a man who broke the solemn vow of celibacy that he once took before the altar of God. The Roman Church also is very bitter toward the ex-priest and as soon as one of them is put in charge of Italian work, rumors as to everything he did or did not do while in that church are spread through the colony, thus neutralizing the good work which he might otherwise do. I do not blame the Roman Church for having a grudge against ex-Roman priests. The Roman Church takes a boy, usually of peasant extraction, when about twelve years old; keeps him in a seminary till the age of twenty-two or twenty-four; educates him, in most cases at its own expense; then the man goes out and after a short period leaves the Church which has made him. Can anyone blame it for having a natural feeling of resentment?

A few years ago Father George Bartoli, formerly editor of the leading Italian paper in the world, "La Civiltà Cattolica," entered the Waldensian Church as a layman. Nothing could be found against him, for he was a man of great learning and deep spirituality, yet wherever he went the rumor was spread about that the poor man was half insane, having been sunstruck in India, whither the

Pope had once sent him on a special mission. After centuries of experience the Waldensian Church in Italy has come to the decision seldom to admit an ex-Roman Catholic priest to its ministry. When a good Roman priest is desirous, through personal conviction, to leave his church, he is helped in every way to secure a position as a teacher, lecturer, writer, librarian, and so on, but very seldom is he put in charge of a congregation.

The average salary of an Italian minister is much lower than that of his American colleague who lives in the same surroundings. If one takes into consideration the fact that Italian ministers live in comparatively large towns where the expense of living is great, surrounded by the poorest people who constantly need help, that they have to keep in touch with the thoughts and events of both Italy and America—and that means the buying of books, magazines, and newspapers—and that they have fairly large families, one will readily see how inadequate such a salary is.

A good man was telling me that he had met an Italian minister who, instead of attending to his work, was acting in the capacity of a lawyer between employees who sustained injuries while working and their employers. I found later on that the salary of that man was ridiculously small and that he could not possibly have supported

his family on it; hence the necessity on his part of this extra work. I have found in different cities that Italian ministers have the reputation of not paying their grocers' bills—a very bad habit, one must admit—on account of which some of them lost their positions. As a rule the American pastors under whom they were working and who thought them unscrupulous because they did not pay their grocer's bill, had ample means and were getting the credit for the work of the mission while the Italian missionaries were expected to do the work and to be satisfied with the crumbs that fell from the pastor's table. I went to see an acquaintance, the minister of an Italian church, and I found him surrounded by two or three dozen Pomeranian dogs. "What in the world is the meaning of this?" I asked. He raised his shoulders with the characteristic gesture of a Southern Italian. "My salary is not enough to support my family and I am trying to help out by raising dogs." The alternative for that poor man was either to get out of the ministry and let his people go to the dogs or to raise dogs himself.

The most pathetic side of the Italian ministry in America is its loneliness. While the American minister living in a Protestant country meets friends of all kinds, the Italian minister in his own colony lives surrounded by people who are either religiously

prejudiced against him or who belong to his fold. In the former case he gets the cold shoulder, in the latter, even if he finds congenial people in his congregation, he must be careful not to show any partiality, because the ignorant part of his flock would be extremely jealous at any preference shown. While, again, the American pastor finds his college and seminary friends about him, or can easily make friends in the professional class, the Italian pastor, who has not attended institutions in this country and who is more or less handicapped by the difficulty of the language, finds himself alone. I think that it is a noble work to cheer and encourage the man who voluntarily chooses to live in the slums of a big American city in order to teach strength of character through following Christ's example and who stands alone amidst all kinds of difficulties and temptations. I remember the pathetic story of a man who for fifteen years had worked faithfully in America for the spiritual welfare of the Italian. "I was going to give up," he said, "for it seemed that every one had forgotten me and my family. I went to a photographer on some business and the man, who was a good Christian, inquired about my work and talked in a friendly and encouraging way to me. I came out of his studio knowing that I was not utterly alone."

There are, however, so many beautiful

compensations for an Italian minister that they far exceed the drawbacks that I have mentioned, as a great light overcomes the shadow.

Sometimes Christians strain their eyes to look far back through the centuries in order to discover striking instances of the power of the spirit of God manifested in human lives. We can find apostolic types in the slums of our modern cities. The message of a gospel of power and peace sometimes strikes home more effectively in the case of people who are "down and out" than in the case of so-called respectable ones. It is the old story of Christ the Saviour of sinners which is not understood by those who are self-satisfied. What can be more helpful to a Christian worker than to see as often as we do in our religious endeavors among Italians, men and women in sadness and in sin made "new creatures" in the most complete sense of the word by the mysterious power of love that we call in theological terms "the saving power."

I found a man in a hospital, where he was confined for having been stabbed in a gambling place. I saw his family made destitute and sorrowful by this man's passion for gambling. If there is a passion that is hard to eradicate in the heart of a man of a Southern race it is gambling; yet when this man came out of the hospital and in a spirit of repentance cried out to God for forgive-

ness and help, "the miracle" took place, and since then (this was six years ago) he has not sat at a gambling table.

A young man from the Abruzzi was unjustly discharged from a factory where he was working by his employer, who happened to belong to an Evangelical church. The young man came to me in rage, chafing at the injustice committed by one who claimed to be a Christian. "If God is just, why does He not punish this hypocrite?" This was his childlike way of reasoning. I could not quiet him and he went his way still angry. Next morning at six o'clock the bell rang and my young man appeared with a downcast countenance. He had been unable to sleep all night from remorse at having offended God and he came to me asking forgiveness for the rude way in which he had spoken. After a short and earnest prayer he went away in peace, leaving in my hands a package on which was written in rude handwriting "To my Pastor." I found within a new nightshirt. It was the only possession that he cherished, a gift from his mother, and he brought it to me. The fact that he was a foot taller than I am did not occur to him, and I enjoyed and kept the gift as a token of gratitude from a simple soul.

Another young man to whom I have taught a little English, on receiving an Eng-

lish Bible, wrote me a few days ago this letter:

"Dear Mr.———,

"I was glad to receive your Bible. Thank you. I have gone farming. We have about five hundred chickens, two horses. We have a lot of apple trees. I take care of all the chickens. I feed and water them in the morning.

"Your loving friend,
N. N."

It may seem a little thing, but this letter of the young man striving to express his gratitude in a new language into which I had initiated him touched me deeply and encouraged me to go on with greater consecration in my work.

The activities of the Italian pastor are by no means confined to his parish work. Here is a page from the memorandum of one of them which gives the outline of a day's work:

"8 a. m. Christening of B's child at the Floating Hospital.

"9 a. m. See lawyer about C's case.

"9.30 a. m. Present a petition at the State House to organization a Home Guard company.

"10.30 a. m. City Hospital. See F. and A. Take Italian books and flowers to them.

"4 p. m. Committee for the XX Sept. anniversary.

"8 p. m. Lecture on preservation of birds at the Public Library."

If he is the right sort of a man the Italian pastor comes to be looked up to as a public-spirited citizen and as such can be of great use in the community.

The most necessary helper to the Italian worker is a lady missionary. Italians regard with suspicion a pastor's going around to call upon women while the men are working, and even when the men are at home, unless the pastor is an old man, he has to confine his conversation to them only, while the women wash dishes, put the children to bed, or sit silently in a corner of the room. It is, therefore, only possible for a lady visitor to help in the care of the women and children of the congregation. In fact, the lady missionary is of such importance that very few missions, especially where a careful study has been made as to how to develop Italian work, are without one and many Italian churches have a pastor and from two to seven lady missionaries. The difference between a mission with a lady visitor and one without is so striking, the attendance of women and children so much larger in the first instance, that no one can fail to grasp the importance of the lady worker in the Italian field.

The deaconesses, parish visitors and lady missionaries working among Italians in America are, as a rule, Italians with Ameri-

can training. The Presbyterian Church, which has carried on the most successful work among Italians, after many years of mistakes and sad experience has found out that while Italian women will receive an American parish visitor with a sweet smile, the next day they will tell the Italian pastor that they thought her somewhat crazy, or at least very peculiar. There is such a chasm between the mentality of simple Italian women and that of the American lady parish visitor and there is such a strong tendency in the Anglo-Saxon race to enforce its views without much consideration for the views and traditions of the other race, that the results are not lasting. Of course there are exceptions, as, for instance, Deaconess Gardiner of Grace Church, New York, who has been in the Italian work for more than twenty years and who started out in a spirit of humility, trying to learn and to yield in order to succeed. Besides spending many months in Italy repeatedly and thus having a good knowledge of Italian, she is an exceptionally broad-minded woman. The ideal combination for successful Italian work, however, is to have men and women workers of Italian extraction with good training both in Italy and America. They will understand the problem of the first generation as well as that of the second; they will appeal to the fathers and mothers and also to the children. If they speak English

with an Italian accent, so do the children of Italian parentage, and, having grown up with the second generation, they will know how to handle them.

The future of a church lies in its young people. The Sunday School is usually the foundation of the future congregation. In Italian work, however, this is very seldom the case. The new generation will grow up in the colony but when its members have reached a marriageable age, they will almost invariably move into an American quarter. They were born in this country, their language and education are those of an American, their financial condition is better than that of their parents, why should they stay in a foreign atmosphere? The Italian work must prepare them to step into an American church as soon as they move away from the Italian colony.

A few months ago a lady visitor answered my question about her Sunday School by saying: "We are getting on as usual, having almost a new Sunday School every winter." There is no trouble about getting children to come to an Italian Sunday School; the trouble lies in getting the right kind to come, those who will stay and grow with us. As a rule the superintendent is never sure of his children unless they are children of members of the church. The Italian family is still founded upon authority; the Italian father may let his children

go to a Sunday School for a few months because they get small presents at Christmas or Easter, or because they are out of the way for a few hours, but if he does not himself belong to the church, some fine day the child stops coming to the Sunday School room. Christmas has gone by, or the child has simply lost his interest, or a neighbor had said a word to the father as to the disgrace of letting his child go to a non-Roman Catholic Sunday School, or—if the father is even mildly attached to the Roman Church—the Roman bishop is coming around for confirmation, or any one of a thousand other similar things,—and the child is gone. The Italian pastor knows, however, that every time a man or a woman joins the church it means that a few children are sure to be added to the Sunday School, children who will grow up faithful to the church and will make good churchmen and churchwomen in the future. A great deal of bad feeling among the different Italian missionaries in large cities and between the Protestant and Catholic churches could be eliminated to the advantage of all if the set rule were always enforced never to admit to the Sunday School any child who was attending another Sunday School. I have found children, especially at Christmas or the picnic season, who were attending three Sunday Schools every Sunday. There are plenty of chil-

dren in the streets who do not attend Sunday School; let us try to secure them.

The Sunday School should always be conducted in English, with an English Bible class for the young people as a somewhat separate organization, the Sunday School being especially for the children. There should also be a service for the young people every Sunday in English and to it the fathers and mothers should always be invited, so as to make them familiar with the English service. Yet the young people should at the same time have a part in the Italian service as singers, ushers and so on, that they may be kept in touch with the Italian language, which is the connecting link between parents and children. Around the Italian religious worker there is always a small band of American volunteers whose unselfish devotion and deep spirituality act as the strength of the friends of Moses who held up his arms when he was weary. They are a peaceful refuge in time of weariness and a source of strength in the hour of need. They are helpful for the most part as Sunday School officers and teachers.

Energy and money are in many cases thrown away in the Italian missions by duplicating institutional and social work which is better done by the specially trained workers of perfectly equipped establishments, perhaps but a block from the mission. Besides this duplication and the harm

done by the undesirable separation of the boys and girls of the institutional mission from the rest of the boys and girls of the community, let us remember that the church has the special vocation of giving to the people that which no other institution in the colony is there to give, spiritual food. The strength of a church depends upon its faithfulness to this message. Let the Italian church inspire its members to co-operate in bringing about the success of all good institutions in the neighborhood, let it be a centre of noble, joyful, altruistic inspiration to the community, but it has proved to be the death blow to many an Italian church when it has entered into competition with educational, social and institutional establishments existing in its vicinity; for it has thereby lost its "raison d'être" as a church. In such a case it would have been much better for the work to have suspended all religious activities, to have removed the pastor, and to have converted the church into an entirely non-religious institution. In this way it would have reached more people without the danger of cutting off a few from the rest of the community.

The Italian work is by its nature a temporary one, but it is one of the most needed as long as Italian immigrants continue to disembark by thousands on American soil.

CHAPTER V.

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP.

How to approach Italians.—The Italian population in small centres.—LOVE: the important requisite for success.—HUMILITY: The golden key to open hearts.—Psychological and historical study of the people.—Wasted efforts and blunders.—Beware of the beggars.—Against proselytizing.—Whom we can reach.—Ceremonials and methods of approach.—Familiarity and respect.—Results and compensations.

There is scarcely a community in America, especially an industrial one, which does not number Italians among its residents. The religious leaders of almost every city in the United States will sooner or later have to face the problem of what to do with the foreign element of their community. It is in order to prepare religious workers to a certain extent to deal with this problem and to inspire them with a deep sense of responsibility toward the foreigner, and especially the Italian, that I venture to make a few suggestions.

There are numberless and wonderful opportunities for every American worker, for every clergyman in connection with the work among foreigners if only he knows how to avail himself of them. But if in his centre or parish there are hundreds of Italians, struggling for a bit of bread, bewildered by the new surroundings in which they find themselves, hampered by the dif-

ficulty of learning a language so utterly different from their own, often deceived and misled by scoundrels of their own or American blood, drifting into religious indifference or worse, tempted for the first time in their lives by new vices fostered by the saloon system, the dance hall, and the cheap moving picture show, and if under these circumstances, he dismisses the whole subject by saying what a good clergyman said to me on my arrival in Boston: "Italians *must* be Roman Catholics and if they are not, so much the worse for them," then these suggestions are not for him.

Let us be broad and realize that Italians, like all other races, have the right to choose the way in which they wish to take their spiritual food. Why should a German Lutheran, a Dutch Presbyterian, or a Swiss Calvinist have the right, on coming to America, to become a member of an American Church, and yet it be considered wrong for an Italian to do the same? An Italian *must* be Roman Catholic? There are thousands of them in America who do not wish to remain faithful to the Roman Church. To say that it is wrong for them to break their allegiance to the Church of Rome is as logical as to refuse the American citizenship papers to an Italian who is willing to fulfil the requirements, on the ground that birth, blood, language, tradition have made him an Italian and such he must remain.

Think of Italians as human beings, as fellow men, just as free as you and your fathers to accept or reject the teachings of a church, and not as people who must be what your feelings or prejudices wish them to be. Look facts in the face and you will come to realize that a large percentage of Italians have broken away from the religious influence of their mother church and, knowing the Roman Church better than you do, may have sufficient reasons for so doing. You will see in them earnest souls who are going through the ordeal of mental and spiritual struggle which your forefathers went through at the time of the Reformation; you will perceive that for an Italian to become an American churchman is as logical as for him to become an American citizen. If you understand all this and in a spirit of love and broad-mindedness try to lead him back to the purest ideals of Christianity as they are held by our churches, giving him the right and privilege which you claim for yourself, then beautiful and lasting results will be the reward of your efforts. The foreigner needs American leadership; it is for the best Americans to place before him American ideals and standards of life. Who knows better than you the history, the traditions, the customs of America, and who can in word and deed better present them to the foreigner?

The Italian clergyman is the connecting

link, the interpreter of Italian needs to America and of America to Italians; for that reason he will be indispensable as long as the Italian immigrant continues to land here. In large Italian colonies, where the problems of the work are so numerous, where the difficulties of dialects, types, classes are almost insurmountable, the American clergyman can never, according to past experience in all Christian communities of America, expect to be as efficient as the Italian minister, who, besides his training in Italy, has had a good education in this country. "You cannot study the life of a people successfully from the outside. You may by so doing succeed in discerning the few fundamental traits of character in their local colors, and in satisfying your curiosity with surface observations of the general modes of behavior; but the little things, the common things, those subtle connectives in the social vocabulary of a people, those agencies which are born and not made, and which give a race its rich distinctiveness, are bound to elude your grasp. There is so much in the life of a people which a stranger to that people must receive by way of unconscious absorption. Like a little child he must learn so many things by involuntary imitation. An outside observer, though wise, is only a photographer. He deals with externals. He can be converted into an artist and portray the life of a race by working from the soul out-

ward, only through long, actual, and sympathetic associations with that race." * As it will take too long to gain an inside knowledge of the Latin and as after all the foreigner in America is bound to change in the course of a few years, it is much better to let experts of their race do the pioneer work. There is, however, plenty of work for an American clergyman placed in a small country centre and in whose parish there is a group of Italians, not large enough to justify the calling of an Italian minister. In rural parishes, in villages with a small foreign population, the earnest American clergyman can bring many lonely, homesick foreign souls nearer to God.

The Italian population in small places is more homogeneous than in large cities; the group is composed always of people from the same part of Italy, having the same customs and dialect, and frequently closely related by blood. The criminal element does not exist there, for it betakes itself to the cities. This group usually consists of good, honest, hard-working men and their families. Furthermore, in small places the foreigner is less isolated and mixes more with the American element; consequently he learns the English language rapidly.

I spent a summer in the Berkshire Hills and, to my great surprise, one day an Italian came to my house to invite me to preach at

*The Syrian Christ, by A. M. Rihbany, Boston, 1916.

a prayer meeting at the local Baptist Church. When I went there I found fourteen Italians present and they told me the story which I often hear among my people: "We were without religion, living only for the material advantages that America offered us. One day a Christian man, a minister of this church, spoke to us of Christ, the Saviour, and we found a new life at the foot of the Cross." They went on to tell me of other groups of Italians who were attached to Evangelical churches here and there throughout the district; yet that was the first time that they had heard the Gospel in their own language.

To be practical, I will suggest briefly the absolute requisites for success in your work among Italians.

Love is the first requisite; love that takes away even the shadow of a feeling of superiority; love that makes allowances for difference of opinion, training, conception of life; love that does not stop to look at the exterior, is not daunted by an unshaved face or dirty hands, but goes straight to the essential and admires the honesty of purpose and simplicity of character. A little word of love, a little act of kindness, an earnest desire to help, prompted by sincere feeling, are things which count more in winning Italian hearts than beauty of ceremonial, eloquence of sermons, and knowledge of Italian literature.

There was a young Italian who used timidly to attend a church in a town of Pennsylvania. The wife of the pastor had noticed this man sitting in a back pew, and had spoken to him. One day as she was crossing a road in her automobile, she caught sight of our friend Tony working with a gang of laborers. She stepped out of her automobile and inquired about his welfare, reminding him that there was a weekday service that very night at the church. No sooner had she gone than a gesticulating crowd surounded Tony to find out who this kind lady was. This was Tony's hour of triumph; he took out of his pocket a New Testament in Italian and told them that he had found a church where people were real brothers and sisters, for (he read out of the Book) "God is no respecter of persons," and that the lady who had stepped out of an automobile to speak to a poor laborer did so because she had the love of God in her heart. There is now a large Italian congregation connected with Tony's church as a result of this act of Christian love.

The second requisite is also a moral one: humility, the virtue of saints. I am well aware of the great spiritual power of the Roman Church; saintly priests of the type of Father Semeria and of the sweetness of character of Bishop Bonomelli are numerous in the Roman Church; yet I agree with R. J. Campbell who wrote lately in that won-

derful book, "A Spiritual Pilgrimage": "I saw many things I did not like, especially in Italy, where religion appeared to be tinged with grossness, irreverence, and superstition, which rendered it most unattractive. This was more the case in the south than in the north . . ." and it is just from the south of Italy, where these conditions exist, that the Italians in America come. Arrogance and pride were the besetting sins of the average Italian priest in the native village: authority was the key-note of his teaching. Italians have had enough of that. Oh, for the humble man who, in a brotherly spirit, would go among them to teach the love of one common Father, of whom we are all children!

When I see the air of patronage assumed by some Americans working among Italians, when I read articles describing them as a handful of ignorant, semi-civilized, primitive people, by those who are undertaking to be the leaders among them; when I notice how pride has blinded these leaders so that they cannot see the treasures of honesty, simple virtues, gratitude, that are in the hearts of my countrymen, then I pray for leaders gifted with the gift of humility, the golden key that opens all hearts.

Do not imitate the authoritative air of a Roman "padre," thinking that the nearer you come to that model the more you will be welcomed by men who are familiar with that

type. You are Americans, sons of a democratic country, and you must represent Christianity in new ways; be pastors embodying the ideals of democracy, and in humility teach my people that you would guide them by love and conviction rather than by authority. We have an Italian proverb, similar to the English one, it says: "One can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

Italians are of an old race. Through centuries of struggle, sorrow and varied experience, they have acquired a wisdom of life that even the lowliest among them has inherited by instinct. You are of a young nation. It may seem a hard thing to say but there are lessons on the philosophy of "how to live" that you may have to learn from the Italian immigrant, and only a spirit of humility will enable you to go among them to learn as well as to teach. When you see the patience of people who work hard without murmuring, when day after day you notice the meek courage of an Italian mother striving to raise a large family and carrying a burden that would seem unbearable to any American woman; when you admire Italians who, under all kinds of hardship, go on smiling and trusting in men and God, then you may understand what I mean when I say that there are lessons to be learned among Italians.

You may win the admiration of my peo-

ple by your eloquence; you may gratify them by being able to say a few words in their language and by showing a certain knowledge of their history; you may inspire respect by having them notice how great an influence you have in the community; but there is only one way to win their hearts: be a brother to them.

As to mental preparation, being very busy in your parish work you cannot spare the time to study their language, and even if you had time (unless the Italian population in your place is very large, and in that case it would be best to have an Italian coworker) it will never pay you to undertake a thorough study of the Italian language, which would mean years of study before you would have sufficient command of it to use it readily. Besides, when you know the language, you may have to begin the study of dialects, for, though all understand Italian, they may answer your questions in their different dialects. Remember that it is better to spend your time in training Italians to understand English than to spend it in learning their language. What to me seems more important than a knowledge of the language is the psychological study of the people whom you wish to reach. Therefore, I would suggest first a careful investigation as to the part of Italy from which the majority of the people in your parish have come. By doing that you will

save a great deal of time and trouble. Once you have found out where they come from, get books dealing with the local history of their native places, their traditions, customs and folk-lore. There you will acquire a knowledge which will be of great value in discovering the virtues and the failings and in understanding the temperaments and the needs of these people. Get literature that describes these people; we have many books on these topics and by writing to any leading librarian in America you can secure a list of the titles. I have put a list of them at the end of this work which may be of some use. Such knowledge will undoubtedly help you to carry on a consistent and well-planned work among these people. You will, for instance, understand why the Sicilian is suspicious when you notice how many times through history, over and over again, the Sicilian has been betrayed, deceived and abused by both government and church. You will not wonder at finding a Neapolitan light-hearted, fickle and tending towards exaggeration after discovering how much Spanish blood there is in his veins.

Lack of concentration of effort such as I should wish you to avoid leads not only to a loss of time and energy but also to a misunderstanding of the real state of the case. Some time ago, for instance, I read in a church paper that in order to know how to deal with Italians and to understand them

one should read "The Life and Times of Cavour" by William Roscoe Thayer. The book is an excellent one but it deals exclusively with Northern Italian types of the "bourgeois" class of the middle of the nineteenth century. You will probably have to deal with the peasants of Southern Italy of the present day. You might just as well suggest to an English clergyman that in order to understand and to know how to influence the sporting set of Americans residing in London, he had only to read "The Life and Times of John Hay" by the above-mentioned author, which deals with the American political element of the nineteenth century.

There are a few reefs to be avoided. As soon as the news is spread in the Italian colony that you are interested in the welfare of Italians, the few of the begging type residing in your parish will descend upon you. Knowing that it will be hard for you to detect them, they will start with promises to fill your church with their family and friends; they will try to convince you of the enormous influence they have over their people; they will bore you to death with the importance of their family in Italy and the education they have received abroad . . . "These are the signs by which you shall know them" . . . . Promise nothing, give nothing, investigate every case carefully before you help, and as a rule try to get some

of their own people to help needy cases by appealing to their sense of obligation to help those of their own race; the beggars will disappear in a short time and the earnest, the spiritually needy will come to you in their place. Woe to that parish which has a reputation among Italians of being frequented by these few of the begging type. The best, the humble, those who are poor but self-respecting will stay away as long as such impostors are encouraged there. Italians are quite capable of self-sacrifice and of helping each other when, instead of putting temptation in their way by your reputation for being easily taken in, you appeal to their best feelings.

Do not attempt to proselytize. The Italians who come to you will be, as a rule, those who have willingly broken their connection with Rome; for no matter what you call yourself, Protestant, Evangelical, Catholic, Pastor, Father, you will always be known as the Protestant minister in the colony. For Italians there is no compromise; either one is a Romanist, or he is a Protestant, or he does not care at all for religion. However, if your path leads you across a good Roman Catholic Italian, try to make him see more clearly the spiritual, helpful laws of Christianity and advise him to stick to his church. He will be an inspiring element among his brethren.

I would urge that you leave aside the mat-

ter of entering into the fellowship of the church, even with those who no longer wish to be Romanists. The main point is to awaken their spiritual life, to bring them to the "purifying stream of living water," the rest is secondary, it will take care of itself. If you do this, they will slowly but surely make known to the Roman Catholics of your community that you are trying to do something better than to increase the number of your congregation; they will see that your efforts are above the question of church membership and will come to sympathize with the earnestness of your motives. There will always be some of a narrow type who will accuse you of proselytizing, and the best thing is simply to go on with your work, supported by the feeling that you are sincere in your motives. Besides, this narrow type as a rule consists of those who possess a spirit of proselytism. The Roman Catholic priest who persistently and systematically charges me with a sectarian spirit in my work in Boston is the one who lately wrote that the work that he had done which brought him the greatest happiness was to baptize a young Protestant girl into the Roman Church, calling that instance "a work of evangelization among heretics and infidels."

We all agree that forms and ceremonies are secondary matters. Let Italians have their own way in regard to forms and even

in regard to doctrines. With certain types who still cling to elaborate ceremonials, being alienated from the Roman Church merely because of the political intrigues of that church in their native land, it will be a mistake to be too simple in the form of worship. The experience of many of our Italian clergymen (which, of course, is not universal) is that these people are still strongly attached to their church, and it will be better for us not to proselytize, but to encourage them to be faithful to their church. An American leader working among Italians must never forget that which seems so hard for the average Anglo-Saxon to grasp, namely, that Italians may be strongly anti-clerical (against priests and the political aspiration of the Roman Curia) and yet be faithful Roman Catholics. Often ministers of different denominations have reported to me the presence of "good Protestant" Italians in their communities; on close investigation I generally found that they were misled because these Italians freely discussed the weakness of the Roman Church, though they never thought of leaving their mother church. Rather have no congregation attend your services than secure one by taking the weak members of another church into yours.

With the average Italian who has no prejudice against coming to your church because he has no church, you must be careful

not to give the impression of being similar in worship to the Roman Church. The greatest work among Italians has been done with simple ceremonials. The work in connection with Grace Chapel and San Salvatore in New York, Emmanuel in Philadelphia, Christ Church in Boston, has already reached hundreds of Italians through the simplest ceremonials. There have been missions among the Italians started many years before these just mentioned which have adopted an elaborate ritualistic service and yet have not withstood the test of time. To say that Italians need those forms shows a certain ignorance of the field which the Italian worker has before him. There are Italians and Italians. There may be some who will be attracted by a ritualistic service, others who will be repelled by it. We have thousands of Masons, Waldensians, Protestants of all denominations, Freethinkers, Socialists, Indifferents, who will not go inside a church which suggests the Roman Church. And those are just the people whom we need to reach. By a psychological reaction they have no taste for an elaborate service that will recall to mind the church which they have left from strong motives. They have had enough of forms, processions, incense, enough so that they can go through two generations without them. Do not force your views. You may or may not be a ritualist; in either case you must be willing to sacri-

fice your personal theories and simply try to find out from the people you are endeavoring to reach what kind of method will succeed best in accomplishing the great purpose you have in mind: namely, to bring them nearer to God. An American novelist gave a good definition of "theories." "A theory," he writes, "is considerably like a non-leakable fountain pen—all right until you go bragging to your friends about how well it works. Then look out. I carried one of 'em—a pen, not a theory—upside down in my pocket for six months and it didn't leak a drop. One day I shook it to prove to Jerry Delaney that it couldn't leak, and I had to buy Jerry a new white vest."

The argument used by the advocates of elaborate ceremonials, of confession, of the Mass for the dead and living, is that Italians are accustomed to those things. What class of Italians are familiar with them? The Mason, the Waldensian, the Protestant of any denomination, the Freethinker, the Socialist, the Indifferent? Not at all; for these people, since they never go inside a Roman church, know nothing of its ceremonials. If, therefore, the idea is to reach Italians who are familiar with confession and Mass, I am afraid there is a strong proselytizing spirit lurking in the minds of the advocates of these ceremonials, for only Roman Catholics are familiar with such. There may be Roman Catholics who have a temporary

grudge against their church because of some scandals they have seen in connection with it or because the Roman Church in Italy was not patriotic. But have we not scandals in all types of churches? Is it not true that in America the Roman Church is not aggressively anti-American? Then why not persuade those good Roman Catholics to go back to their mother church, instead of arousing family wrath, misunderstanding and persecution by trying to proselytize them?

Every Christian worker has the right to administer spiritual food to every human soul; but when it is a question of church affiliation he has only the right to deal with the churchless, otherwise his work will be worse than that of the fool who thought he was getting wealthier by taking money out of his left pocket and putting it in his right. The churchless, those who do not care for religion, the Evangelical who by right belong to us, these are the Italians whom we desire to reach; and there are plenty of them. Aim to touch their hearts; study the class you have to deal with; take into account the psychological laws of reaction; be willing to adjust yourself to them. "The distinguishing feature of Anglicanism is that it allows the largest amount of personal liberty, both as regards opinion and also as regards the use of Catholic traditions, which is permitted by any ecclesiastical body in the

world." * Italians are quick to adapt themselves to new customs, and a ceremonial somewhat different from that to which they have been accustomed will give a touch of novelty which will appeal to them. Some time ago I was in a car which stopped to let in two Italians near the wharf where the immigrants land; one, I saw by his clothes, had just arrived from Italy. They sat in front of me and I heard the newcomer (who evidently did not suspect me of a knowledge of his language) ask why I wore my collar buttoned at the back. His companion told him I was a priest and explained that in this country priests do not wear their cassocks on the street. The only comment of the immigrant was "I like it better; he looks more like a man." Yet there is more difference between a collar and a cassock than between a chasuble and a surplice. Still, it would be a mistake not to take into consideration the aesthetic character of the Latin. A church building must look like a church building and not like a dance hall. To start Italian work in a place where the day before there was a grocery store or a saloon, as I have seen done, is to give the impression that we think more of the room we sleep in than of the place we worship in. I visited lately an Italian Presbyterian Church in New York and saw a Eucharistic table in the middle of the chancel with candlesticks on it. The

* Memoirs of a Brother, Hugh Benson.

pastor had noticed that if the service was not impressive and solemn, the people were not satisfied. In the matter of dress in general two dangers are to be avoided: overdressing and not dressing well enough. Both are characteristic of the undeveloped parvenu type of person. The same standard may be applied to ceremonials among Italians. Elegance and simplicity are oftentimes twin sisters.

Mix with the Italians freely; go to their homes in the evening, when you will find all the family gathered; you will always be welcome and treated with great respect. Avoid accepting too freely invitations to eat with them. Once you accept an invitation from one, every other Italian you know will feel it his duty to invite you. Italian banquets are rather elaborate and you may cause expense to those who cannot well afford it. Besides, you may get on too familiar terms and lose your influence. Avoid also standing sponsor at baptisms and marriages. If you accept once, you will be overwhelmed with babies and bridegrooms, and you will give offence if you show a spirit of partiality.

Your path may cross that of Italians who are bitter and even vulgar in their denunciation of religion. Deal gently with them; they are sore souls and need a special treatment. By using such gentleness you will spare America many future Anarchists.

Mazzini says: "Those men who abhor all religion became such because of the corruption of creeds, of priests who prostituted the name of God to venal calculations or to fear of the powerful, to tyrants who blasphemed God by invoking Him as the protector of their tyranny." You have a splendid opportunity for reaching these men as ministers of a church free from state interference. The two cords of Italian hearts which always respond to the sympathetic touch of a master hand are patriotism and family love. Bind together these two essential feelings of the human heart by a simple, not overdoctrinal, Evangelical faith and you will have lasting results. Insist upon the essential, clean, Christian life by the power and love of God, through Jesus Christ.

What compensations will come to you! It is almost with reluctance that I mention compensations, for I know that you feel that you are working in the vineyard of God for its own sake, but there are compensations and great ones. The awakening of spiritual life, the joy of giving visions to those who had none, the knowledge that you are helping in a most abiding way the people in your parish who have the fewest advantages, these are things that will inspire and sustain you. In this work you see the fruits of victory, peace, self-sacrifice, love, grow where before there was only barren soil and natural instinct; and even where virtue was the

leading motive of life you see that virtue quickened by the power of the spirit of God. Besides, that which is most permanent and admirable in America has been produced by Christian gentlemen. In helping to develop and to strengthen the Christian life of the newcomers, you are reproducing the type of men that made this country what it is. A good Christian is a good citizen of his nation. In the joy of seeing love and gratitude in the eyes of those to whom you have ministered spiritually, in the blessings of mothers and fathers of the children whom you have helped to grow into beautiful manhood and womanhood, in the secret prayers of young wives whose husbands you have brought back from gambling and drinking places, you will find ample compensation for your work. When I was leaving a city of the Middle West, a young Sicilian wife, whose husband had given up an intemperate life to follow Christ, kissing my hand, said in the melodious Sicilian dialect: "May the good Lord walk before you and smooth the way. You have not only brought my husband and myself to the joys of the Lord, but you have given me back a husband and a father to my children, a man who was a gambler and a fighter and is now a Christian."

If you wish for experiences such as the apostles had, God is sending souls to America to give you your opportunity.

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TITLE
Social and religious life of Italians in America.

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